

# Music & Letters

*A Quarterly Publication*

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GUSTAV HOLST

From a drawing by William Rothenstein

# *Music and Letters*

JULY, 1920.

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## POEM FROM THE *BENGALI*

THE crowd listens in restless wonder to Kāshi, the young singer, whose voice like a sword dances in feats of skill amidst hopeless tangles, cuts them in pieces, and exults.

Among the applauding hearers sits silent old Rajah Pratāp in weary endurance. For his own life had been nourished and encircled by Barajtāl's songs, like a happy land by a river with its branching flow of beauty. His rainy evenings and still hours of autumn days spoke to his heart through Barajtāl's voice, and his festival nights trimmed their lamps and tinkled their bells to his songs.

When Kāshi stopped for rest, Pratāp smilingly winked at Barajtāl and spoke to him in a whisper,—“Master, now let us hear music and not this new-fangled fashion of singing, which mimics frisky kittens hunting paralysed mice.”

The old singer, with his spotlessly white turban, made a deep bow to the assembly and took his seat. He struck the strings of his instrument with his thin fingers, shut his eyes, and in timid hesitation began his song. The hall was large, his voice feeble with age, and Pratāp shouted ‘Bravo’ with ostentation and whispered in his ear,—“Just a little louder, my friend.”

The crowd began to chat, some yawned and some dozed, some complained of the heat. The air of the hall hummed with many-

toned inattention ; and the song like a frail boat tossed upon it in vain, till it sank under the low hubbub of sounds.

Suddenly the old man stricken at heart forgot a passage, and his voice groped for it in agony like a blind man in a fair for his lost leader. He tried to fill the gap with strains of casual choice ; but the break remained gaping, and the tortured notes that refused to fit suddenly changed their tune and broke into a sob.

The master laid his head on his instrument, and in the place of his forgotten music came to him the first cry of life that a child brings into the world.

Pratāp touched him gently on his shoulder and said,—“ Come away ; our meeting is elsewhere. I know, my friend, that truth is widowed without love, and beauty dwells not with the many, nor in the moment.”

Rabindranath Tagore

SHANTINIKETAN,

BOLPUR,

*April 20th.*

These lines, specially written for this magazine, come with the following words :—  
“ Allow me to send you the accompanying poem, translated from the original Bengali, as my homage to the memory of the kindness shown to me when I was in England.”

## GUSTAV HOLST

### I.

IN claiming for Gustav Holst that he is essentially a modern composer, I am from the outset laying myself open to misconstruction. The word 'modern' has been much abused, but I would point out that there is all the difference in the world between music which is modern and that which is "in the modern idiom." The "modern idiom" consists of a handful of *clichés* of instrumentation coupled with a harmonic texture watered down from the writings of composers who flourished twenty-five years ago. With this kind of thing Holst's music has nothing to do, he does not serve up all the harmonic tricks of the last quarter of a century, he does not introduce a "major ninth" regularly every eight bars, he is not afraid of long tunes (he has often the courage to let them stand alone, or with the merest suggestion of harmony),\* he is not always making eight horns bellow out high D's, he owes much to Bach, to Purcell, to Byrde and Wilbye; and yet (or perhaps therefore) he is one of the few composers who can be called truly modern.

Modernity does not depend on certain tricks of diction but on the relationship between the mind that expresses and the means of expression. The modern mind needs a modern vocabulary, but the vocabulary will not make the mind modern. Some composers have the modern mind but have not found the idiom which suits it, many more have all the tricks of diction but not the informing mind. We are told that Richard Strauss is a "modern of the moderns" but this is only superficially true; his mind is as early Victorian as that of his father-in-music Liszt—Strauss's music is nothing more than Liszt *plus* one. Mentally he wallows in the German sentimentalism of the fifties. Delius, again in spite of his bewitching harmonic experiments (or is it because of them?) belongs mentally to the eighties.

Mr. Bernard Shaw in a recent number of this journal writes how Sir Edward Elgar could if he chose "turn out Debussy and

\* "This have I done for my true love," op. 34 (Augener), also "Savitri" (cited later in this article).



Stravinsky music by the thousand bars for fun in his spare time." Doubtless he could; but the result would probably be worthless because it would not be to him a natural mode of diction, while Stravinsky's own music is valuable in so far as his style is a real utterance. In the same way Stravinsky could probably, if he chose, write a colourable imitation of Elgar; but it would certainly miss the qualities which make the variations and the slow movement of the second symphony beautiful music.

If Holst's music is modern it is not that he has acquired a few tricks which to-day are hailed with wonder and to-morrow are as flat as stale ginger-beer but that he has a mind which is the heir of all the centuries and has found out the language in which to express that mind. He shows his modernity equally whether he is straining our harmonic sense to breaking point as in Example 1 from the "Hymn of Jesus"\* or writing a simple broad melody like the middle section out of "Jupiter"† (Example 2).

## Ex. 1.

*Lento.* HYMN OF JESUS.

SEMI-CHORUS.

CHORUS I.

CHORUS II.

ORCH.

To you who knock, a door am I: To

*dim.* *f* *dim.*

*coll 8* *8*

\* The Hymn of Jesus, op. 37 (Stainer and Bell).

† "Jupiter," No. 4 of "The Planets," op. 32. Suite for full orchestra.



A musical score for a vocal and piano piece. The score is written for a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a high register, with lyrics: "A - - - men.....", "you who fare, the way.....", and "A - - - men, etc.". The piano accompaniment features a complex, rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The tempo is marked "Andante maestoso".

*p*  
A - - - men.....  
you who fare, the way..... *p* A - - - men, etc.  
*p*

## Ex. 2.

*Andante maestoso.*

JUPITER.

A musical score for a piece titled "Jupiter". The score is written for a piano. The tempo is marked "Andante maestoso". The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble and bass staff. The second system also has a treble and bass staff. The music is characterized by a strong, rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The piece ends with the text "con fine...".

con fine...



Incidentally, it is a pity that this theme is hidden in the middle of "Jupiter" which it does not seem altogether to fit. It ought to be the climax of some great movement which would take the place in the public affections of the sentimentalities of "Finlandia." Or it might be used by the League of the Arts, set to appropriate words (not the rhyming homilies of the "Motherland Song Book") and sung at points of vantage when next we have a peace celebration (which heaven forbid).

Indeed Holst's work never sounds "modern" in the narrow sense of the word (except now and then when he is exceptionally off his stroke) and the reason is that he knows what he wants to say and the way in which he means to say it. There is no attempt to tickle jaded nerves with "new effects" and thus the very strangeness of much of his harmonic texture escapes the notice of the curio hunter, because it is absolutely germane to the whole conception. So it is with his masterly writing for the orchestra—so masterly that it escapes notice. Again the curio hunter is foiled. He hears no squeaks on the piccolo or grunts on the bass-tuba to make him sit up and say "modern orchestration" (though the strange devices are there all the same—for example the *glissando* for full organ in "Uranus"). Holst knows his orchestra from the inside, having been an orchestral player; he does what he wants with it without conscious effort, and the result is that we think not of the orchestration, but of the music. When one is sitting in a Rolls Royce one may be travelling sixty miles an hour, but it does not feel like it.

The modernity of Holst is the result of the simple fact that he is a

modern Englishman and that his music is in direct relation with real life; moreover he has not shrunk from life, but has lived it intensely. To "live" is an expression which has had much harm done it by second rate writers who seem to think that "life" is limited to pretending you like absinthe and keeping a mistress in Montmartre. But Holst has pursued the calling of a hard working, revered and inspiring teacher, he has been a good citizen, a firm friend, a reliable helper in time of trouble. If to have "lived" it is necessary to have eloped with a *prima donna*, to have played mean tricks on one's friends, to be dirty and drunken—if life means no more than that, then indeed the word has little meaning for a man like Holst. But if to live may be summed up in the words "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," then Holst has lived to the full; he has learnt his lesson in the hard school of necessity; he has not run away from the battle but has fought and won.

So many artists are conquered by life and its realities. Money making, marriage, family cares, all the practical things of life are too much for them, and as artists they succumb and the creative impulse shrivels and dies. But to Holst the interests, responsibilities and realities of life are not a hindrance but a stimulus—they are the very stuff out of which he has knit his art, the soil on which it flourishes. To a foolish friend who once said to him, "I suppose you did not marry to help your composition," he answered "That is exactly what I did do." Life and art are to Holst not enemies but the complements of each other, and as time goes on and his life gets busier and more varied, his artistic production becomes larger and finer, his style more mature, pronounced and individual.

The Bohemian is not a natural growth in England. Our Café Royals, our Chelsea Arts Balls, our all night clubs are shams—importations from Paris which have suffered a good deal on the voyage. It is not on such a basis as this that our English art will grow, and it may be well to add here that "in spite of all temptations" which his name may suggest, Holst "remains an Englishman." On his mother's and grandmother's side he is pure English; on his father's side there is Swedish blood, but the Holst family came to England from Russia, where they had long been settled, more than a hundred years ago. There is a good deal of unclear thinking prevalent on the subject of race and nationality. Everyone is to a certain extent of mixed race. But race is only one factor in nationality; it is community of language, of customs, of laws, of religion as well as racial kinship, which binds men into a nation, and judged by these standards we should expect Holst's music to be the outcome of the English point of view.

We may sum up Holst's characteristics as exemplified in his life and reflected in his art as great force of character, indomitable energy, sense of thoroughness and above all intense human sympathy.

Naturally frail in body and handicapped from the outset by a delicate childhood, he has done more work than many a strong and robust man. Although he is only just the wrong side of forty, his works include four operas, seven large works for orchestra and military band, two long items for solo voice and orchestra, three large compositions for chorus and orchestra and a huge quantity of shorter pieces of all kinds; besides which he has had to work hard at his profession of teacher, since his natural bent has led him to interesting rather than largely remunerative pupils. His energy and force of character show themselves in various ways; he has always been a great walker and in student days when money was scarce he would spend part of his holiday walking from London to his home in Gloucestershire. He is a wide reader and an original thinker on all subjects; when he was already approaching middle age, and though early ill-health and the necessity of entering his profession young cut short his classical education at *mensa, mensae*, he set to work to learn enough Sanskrit to be able (with a 'crib' of course, as all good scholars do) to make his own version of the Vedic Hymns on which so much of his music is based.

It was his feeling for thoroughness which led him when he left the College of Music to abandon the eminently respectable career of an organist for which he was destined and to get at music from the inside as a trombonist in an orchestra. Holst has sometimes thought that all the trashy music he had to endure in these early days has had a bad influence on his art. Personally I do not think so. To start with, the very worst that a trombonist has to put up with is as nothing compared to what a church organist has to endure; and secondly, Holst is above all an orchestral composer, and that sure touch which distinguishes his orchestral writing is due largely to the fact that he has been an orchestral player; he has learnt his art, both technically and in substance, not at second hand from text books and models but from actual live experience. Holst has no use for half measures; all the little vanities, insincerities and compromises which go to make up our daily life are entirely outside his ken; they leave him dumb and puzzled and at these moments he seems to retire from the world which we call 'real' into a mystical world of his own. To know all is to forgive all, and in early days, when Holst's knowledge of human weakness was less than it is now, his sincerity and thoroughness occasionally brought him into conflict with the half hearted standards of the

world; I remember a certain choral society which in his youthful enthusiasm he over-dosed with Bach's cantatas, with the result that he was asked to retire in favour of some other conductor and the society returned to its wallowing in the mire.

It was Holst's strong sense of human sympathy which brought him when a young man into contact with William Morris and the Kelmscott Club. The tawdriness of London, its unfriendliness, the sordidness both of its riches and poverty were overwhelming to an enthusiastic and sensitive youth; and to him the ideals of Morris, the insistence on beauty in every detail of human life and work, were a revelation. No wonder then that the poetic socialism of the Kelmscott Club became the natural medium of his aspirations; to Morris and his followers "comradeship" was no pose but an absolute necessity of life. And though as years go on Holst has grown out of the weak points in Morris' teaching, yet his ideal of thoroughness, of beauty and above all of comradeship have remained and grown stronger. It is this almost mystical sense of unity which is the secret of Holst's power as a teacher. He writes himself of "the wonderful feeling of unity with one's pupils when teaching, a feeling of contact with their minds other than the contact occasioned by speech."\* Like all great teachers Holst not only gives but expects to receive, and he will have no half measures; he is sympathetic to ignorance, over-exuberance or even stupidity—but half heartedness, insincerity or laziness have no chance with him; for that reason he will never become a "fashionable" teacher whose *métier* is to impart useless accomplishments to rich people who do not want to learn them. Everyone who comes to Holst must take music seriously—indeed they cannot help it—and it is his very insistence which has made the success of his musical directorship of Morley College. When he first began teaching there he found music treated as a side issue—a sort of decoy to attract students to the College. The authorities were rather alarmed when he openly rejoiced at the fact that the old type of music student began to fall off when he took over the directorship, and there was the inevitable anxious period when the old students left and the new ones had not begun to arrive. The directors looked glum and seriously thought of asking Holst to resign; but in the end he won through, the right students came flocking in—those who really wanted to learn—and now the authorities recognise the music classes at "Morley" as one of their greatest assets.

One of the outstanding events of Holst's connection with Morley

\* "The Mystic, the Philistine and the Artist," a paper read before the "Quest" Society.



College was the performance in concert form of Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (the first performance, I believe, since Purcell's time). The work of preparation was enormous, everyone worked like a slave (indeed one has to when Holst drives, he spares neither himself nor others), every part had to be copied in manuscript, sometimes transposed and re-arranged to suit the limited resources of the College. It is to this performance that we largely owe the magnificent stage production of this work at Cambridge last February, and the fact that the score is now printed in available form and has taken its place as one of our classics.

With all his idealism and mysticism Holst has never allowed himself to become a mere dreamer. He is a visionary but he never allows dreams to inhibit action. He has also a strong saving sense of humour—indeed he might, if he had chosen, have made a name for himself as a comedy actor. His letters, in their peculiar but beautifully clear handwriting, are a precious possession to his friends.

As in his life so in his art Holst does nothing by halves. He can be nobly diatonic with the greatest effect if he wants to as in the following passage from the "Funeral Hymn."\*

**Ex. 3.**

*Moderato maestoso.*

HYMNS FROM THE RIG-VEDA.

The musical score is written for piano and voice. The piano part consists of block chords in the left hand and single notes in the right hand. The vocal line is in the treble clef and features a series of eighth notes. The score is divided into two systems. The first system has a 7-measure rest in the piano part. The second system has a 3-4 measure rest in the piano part.

Or if he wants a harmonic clash he makes a complete one, he never lets one off lightly—as Example 4 will show.

\* Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda Group 1, No. 3, op. 26 (Stainer and Bell).

## Ex. 4.

*Andante.* NEPTUNE.

*pp*  
Flute and bass flute.

*pp*  
Ob. and Picc.  
Trombones.  
Harps.

Ob. and Picc.  
Horns.  
Harps.

Flutes.  
Sea... etc.

Ob.  
Sea... etc.

That he is not afraid of a tune we have already seen in Example 2. Perhaps, sometimes his rhythms and melodies may appear a little too pungent for timid souls, as Example 5.

## Ex. 5.

*Allegro.* JUPITER.

*p*  
etc.

Or perhaps some hearers may find a sense of strain in some of his later music ; probably the strain is with the hearer rather than with the composer. Recently Holst's work appeared at a concert side by side with a composition in which all the commonplaces of the last fifty years were neatly laid out in rows. A critic describes this work as "far more satisfactory" than Holst's. He was right ; Holst's work is not always "satisfactory" it is not meant to be "satisfactory." Holst's later work sometimes makes one feel uncomfortable—and why not ? We live in uncomfortable times just now ; we live in dread of what the future may bring. And such a work as "Neptune" (the mystic) seems to give us such a glance into the future—it ends, so to speak, on a note of interrogation. Many composers have attempted this, sometimes bringing in the common chord at the end as an unwilling tribute to tradition, sometimes sophisticating it by the addition of one discordant note, sometimes letting the whole thin out into a single line of melody ; but Holst in "Neptune" actually causes the music to fade away to nothing.

## Ex. 6.

*Allegretto.* NEPTUNE.

CHORUS I. (Sop. & Alt.)  
(Distant.) *pp*

CHORUS II. (Sop. & Alt.) *pp*

Violins.

(Harp and bass flute omitted.)

(Repeat this bar until the  
sound is lost in the distance.)

We look into the future, but its secrets remain closed to us.

R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS.

*To be continued.*



## MOZART AND THE EUROPE OF HIS DAY

### II.

WE left the young Mozart at his home in Salzburg, somewhat weary after his travels in Italy and the too constant task of composing. I now come to the most eventful journey of his life ; eventful, not because it brought him either money or employment, but because he now for the first time as a grown man mingled with the musical world, without the intervention of his father as adviser, protector, and manager of all his affairs. Salzburg had become intolerable to him ; he wanted to spread his wings and fly like other composers. So it was arranged that his mother should go with him on a lengthy tour to Munich, Mannheim, and Paris ; for his father felt himself unequal to the exertion, and the son was too flighty and impatient to be left entirely to his own discretion. The numerous letters he wrote to his father on this journey show too plainly how true this was ; and the letters of Leopold in return are often full of remonstrances and upbraidings as well as of good advice. They set out in September, 1777 ; the mother never saw her home again, but died in Paris ; the son did not return to Salzburg till May, 1779.

The object of the journey was of course to obtain some permanent musical post which should give the son money and employment, and relieve the father from further expenditure on his behalf ; in this however it was a complete failure. But three great events happened to Wolfgang in these travels, two of which give us a good idea of the musical world in which he was growing up, and the third reveals for the first time one of the most important features in his character.

First, he made acquaintance with the pianofortes of Stein at Augsburg, and with the maker himself. His mother writes from Mannheim to her husband, " Wolfgang is made much of everywhere ; but he plays quite differently from what he does at Salzburg, for there are only pianofortes here, and you never heard anything like the way he manages them ; every one that hears him declares that his equal is not to be found." He had started as a violin player, and indeed wrote six sonatas for piano and violin at Mannheim, among them the remarkable one in E minor which is still a

favourite with discerning violinists ; but he returned to Salzburg a piano-player, and never again performed on the violin in public. The piano henceforward became his natural everyday medium for expressing himself in music. His piano concertos did more later on in Vienna to bring him money and fame than any of his other works, and his extemporary playing seems to have moved some hearers capable of judging, who were admitted to his own house when he let himself go in a flood of musical feeling, to such a pitch of emotion that many years afterwards they could recall nothing like it. We can hardly gain an idea of these inspired moments even from such works as the Fantasia in C minor or the Concerto in D minor ; the mere act of thinking out and writing down a composition probably destroyed the unique charm of the extemporisation.

Secondly, at Mannheim he enjoyed for months the best orchestra in Europe, and wrote to his father about it with enthusiasm ; much more warmly than Burney had written five or six years earlier. Even then Burney evidently looked on it as wonderful, and it may have greatly improved under the conductorship of Cannabich, whom Burney had known as the leading violin. There were clarinets in this band, and good ones ; Mozart had of course heard them before and written for them in Italy, but there were none in Salzburg. This delicious instrument was under his auspices to win its way to the supremacy of the wood wind. But the great lesson to be learnt from the Mannheim band was the secret of expressive playing ; it is curious to read of their power of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* as if it were something altogether new and strange, not to be found elsewhere, not even at Paris. For the Paris orchestra Mozart wrote a Symphony after their own manner, vigorous and brilliant, though not quite from his heart ; but he never forgot the band at Mannheim, as the orchestration of *Idomeneo* showed soon after his return home. From this time forward the orchestra was to become what inspired Mozart and Haydn, Beethoven and his successors. Though that dull Elector, of whom I have already spoken, gave Wolfgang no place and little encouragement, he gave him after all what was worth far more to the world, the material for the imaginative use of orchestral music. Neither Bach nor Handel had known the inspiration of an expressive band like this, nor as yet had Joseph Haydn. But such orchestral playing cannot be achieved without good discipline, and in Cannabich the Mannheim band had a real master. Mozart writes from Paris on July 9th, 1778 : "If the Salzburg orchestra were only organised like that of Mannheim ! I wish you could see the discipline that prevails there, the authority Cannabich exercises ; all is done in earnest. He is the best director I ever saw, is both feared and loved by his

subordinates, who like himself, are respected by the whole town. They behave very differently (from the Salzburg musicians), have good manners, are well-dressed, and do not go to public-houses to get drunk. In Salzburg everyone is master, so no one is master." His father had told him in a recent letter how Michael Haydn had been intoxicated at the organ during Mass. Evidently Salzburg was no place for a musical genius in real earnest.

Thirdly, during this journey Wolfgang fell head over ears in love. He had apparently been always susceptible; at Milan when he was only sixteen we hear of some mysterious beauty fascinating him. But his passion for Aloysia Weber at Mannheim was as genuine as it was imprudent. Her father, uncle of the great composer of the name, was poor, and her fortune was only a wonderful voice and a real genius for singing. She was then barely sixteen, and she lived to become one of the greatest singers in Europe, and to sing in *Die Entführung* and *Don Giovanni*, but not as Frau Mozart. The year was hardly out before she had thrown him over. No doubt he suffered severely, but not for long; he met the family later on in Vienna, and eventually married her sister. In his letters to his father about her he is plainly infatuated. Neither of them had a penny, so of course he wanted to marry her straight off. "Id quod vult, valde vult," his father might have said of him; never in his life did he look seriously ahead, except in matters connected with music, and even there the impossible often seemed possible to his ardent and sanguine soul.

It may seem strange to us that a youth whose artistic work was from the beginning so well ordered, whose genius was in such perfect discipline, should have been so wayward and undisciplined in practical life.\* Partly no doubt the fault was inherent in his nature, but also I think it was due to the too constant and careful supervision of his father in his early years; he had had everything done for him, and had never learnt to stand firmly on his own feet. Again and again at this time the father writes reminding him of all he had done for him, of all the sacrifices he had made, in bitter remonstrance with him for his folly; but did it never occur to him that the one thing he had never taught his son was to think, judge, act for himself, in the small and great matters of everyday life? With great difficulty the father got him away from Mannheim by positive command; but he had drunk deep of a potent draught, and as usual he expressed its charm in music. The splendid song 'Non so d'onde viene,' the words filched from their proper context in Metastasio's drama, but fully suiting his feeling, came perhaps

\* In this weakness we may note a curious parallel in his contemporary, Oliver Goldsmith.

more directly from his heart than anything he had yet written. Later on he was able to recall the inspiration in Cherubino's first song in *Figaro*, 'Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio,' the most perfect expression of a boy's first love to be found in music.

Whoever wishes to study the character of our young artist, a character as full of interest as any in musical history, should read and re-read the letters of this time; we have no others that show him to us so vividly. We see in them many faults: not vices, but yet real shortcomings, some of which never left him even in his later years. They show him self-confident as ever, and often in a sardonic or contemptuous mood; from hints that he drops here and there I feel sure that he did not always observe that outward respect for rank that the German courts of the day demanded. I am strongly inclined to suspect that the great people were shy of him, possibly half afraid of employing him. In person he was insignificant, and they doubtless let him feel it, for he once or twice gives vent to his indignation after some treatment of this kind. With a real artist, with Cannabich, Raaff the tenor, or even Le Gros at Paris, he was at home and a favourite; but I doubt if he ever laid himself out to be dutiful or agreeable to the dull or unmusical great ones of his own land. He had learnt to dislike and despise the new Archbishop Hieronymus\* at Salzburg; and the whole race of dull German nobles had scant courtesy from him. Though he did not know it himself, he was a true son of the revolutionary period.

These letters also show some want of consideration for his father's feelings, and even at one moment for his sister's; but we may make some excuse for a lad passionately in love, and baulked in his love by home letters. But we may not excuse what seems real ingratitude towards a distinguished man who had really done him very great kindness. Grimm, on their arrival in Paris, had taken the mother and son under his protection, and had done all in his power to help Wolfgang; at the mother's death he took him into his own house, and for two months the young man lived on his hospitality and that of the famous Madame d'Epinay, whom he seems to have liked. But he became discontented with Grimm, who doubtless gave him too much good advice (inspired perhaps from Salzburg), and who believed in no music but Italian; and a letter of September 11th, 1778, shows want of consideration for this worthy man his real benefactor. I will not dwell upon this letter and the next, which show the youth at his worst, wilful, self-regarding, and angry. Doubtless Grimm was patronising and irritating; and Wolfgang

\* He succeeded Sigismund in 1772.

had been through much trouble and disappointment; but it may be that the Baron was right, that he understood the character he had to deal with, and that the object of his care was really growing idle and distraught, as Grimm seems to have told his father.

But there is a pleasanter side to his character as it appears in this correspondence. His real devotion to his father is apparent throughout; his thoughtful care in writing to the Abbé Bullinger to break the news of the mother's death to the father, and his tender letter a day or two later to the father himself, show us a good heart and good sense. Bullinger was in fact his good genius in Salzburg, his one faithful and trusted friend; and perhaps we may see the real man better in the one or two letters to the Abbé than in those to a father, whose authority made the son occasionally write with a trifle of disingenuousness. The letter to Bullinger of August 7th, 1778, is full of genuine gratitude most happily expressed; and it also lets us see the youth's real reasons for hating Salzburg as he could hardly have put them in a letter to his father, set forth in that curious sardonic vein that seems to have been a property of the Mozart family, and was specially indulged in by the son.

The wandering sheep made his way slowly home, in obedience to paternal commands. During his absence Europe had been all but plunged once more into a needless war. Joseph II had wished, on the death of the Elector of Bavaria, to get possession of that convenient country in exchange for part of the Netherlands; but this did not suit the great Frederick, who at once showed his teeth and demanded that the proper heir should succeed. This proper heir was that same Karl Theodor, Elector Palatine, who, however feeble as a statesman, claims the gratitude of musicians for the creation and maintenance of the Mannheim orchestra. Maria Theresa, now old and weary of war, used her personal influence with her son and Frederick to induce them to forgo this quarrel, and Frederick, himself old and weary of war, was not obdurate. A settlement was arrived at. Karl Theodor was to be Elector of Bavaria as well as Elector Palatine, and Munich became the metropolis of music in central Germany. This was a great event for Wolfgang. On his way home he found his friend Cannabich already there, with other old friends of the Mannheim band; and within a few months of his return to the parental roof he received an invitation to write a grand opera for the Munich Carnival of 1781. How far this proposal was due to the good offices of Cannabich and Raaff, to whose eternal credit it is that they fully recognised his genius, or how far due to any such recognition on the part of the Elector and his wife, we do not know. However it came about, it gave him the chance for which he had been so long waiting; it



called out all his powers, invigorated by experience both of life and music during his long absence from the hated Salzburg; and the result was his first great masterpiece. No one can open the score of *Idomeneo* without feeling himself in the grip of a great genius, fully matured, entirely in earnest. And the letters written to his father from Munich while the opera was being rehearsed show a corresponding advance in good sense and a knowledge of men, the natural result of a sense of duty to be fulfilled, and of abounding artistic capacity to fulfil it.

Almost directly after the performance of this opera, the Archbishop of Salzburg summoned his "servant" home to accompany him to Vienna. Maria Theresa had died full of years and honour, and Joseph succeeded her as Sovereign of Austro-Hungary. The Archbishop wished to pay his respects to the new Sovereign, and to exhibit his feudal grandeur. What he actually succeeded in doing was to make his name a byword for ever in the history of music. He treated his young composer, who had just won real fame at Munich, with such unpardonable barbarity, that rebellion followed in a few weeks, and genius gained its freedom. Never since then has a fossil feudalism been able to make a slave of a true artist.

The letters of April and May, 1781, are indeed valuable, not only for the history of music but as illustrating the gradual oncoming of the great movement which took definite shape in France a few years later. They show us all the sordid details of a second-rate court; valets, cooks, musicians, and composer, all mixed up together at a big hotel, and the composer forced to take his meal sitting below the valets though above the cooks! The composer could not play even at a charity concert without leave, always unwillingly given by the great Ecclesiastic, who, if he gave a concert himself, of course required his musicians to perform and his composer to compose something special at a moment's notice. Mozart tells his father that he had to write a sonata for piano and violin to play with Brunetti the court violinist, a man whose character he despised as much as his performance, and that he wrote it between eleven and twelve at night,—or rather that he wrote only the violin part, playing the piano part out of his head next day.

Then suddenly the archbishop gave orders for the household to return to Salzburg; he had not been invited by the Emperor to his summer residence in the country, and had taken offence. I think that from this moment Wolfgang made up his mind not to go back to the hated Salzburg. He saw his way to make a living in Vienna with the help of a few kind friends, more especially of the good-hearted Countess Thun, who had won Burney's admiration

a few years earlier ; and he had made a fresh acquaintance with the Weber family, who were now living in Vienna. Freedom was within his grasp, and all he had to do was to be true to himself and his art. It was the great struggle of his life ; though weak in many ways, the consciousness of his talent gave him now the strength to go through with it. Yet it is not easy for us to realize the strain of the moment, seeing that we have left feudalism far behind us, and can hardly conceive of a great artist being in the position of a menial and a dependent. It is hard too to realize what it must have cost a son so devoted to his father to do that which he knew would give his father infinite misgiving and pain,—the very thing that the good man at Salzburg was clearly suspecting that he would do, and urging him now in every letter to avoid. Wolfgang's letter of May 9th is one of singular interest and pathos ; it begins " I am still filled with the gall of bitterness, and I feel sure that you, my good kind father, will sympathize with me." Then it goes on to describe a stormy interview with the Archbishop, who called him all manner of bad names, and said " that he would have nothing to do with such a low fellow." I need not pursue the story, nor dwell upon the parting kick administered to him by Count Arco, the head of the household.

Perhaps it is only fair to ask ourselves whether the young man was possibly too self-asserting, whether the great ecclesiastic his 'master' had not some reason to think him impertinent or even worse. I have already more than once suggested that Mozart had at this time a high opinion of his own powers as compared with those of the musicians around him, and that this made him too easy-going in society for the grandees of the eighteenth century. He writes on March 24th that he had been ordered with the other archiepiscopal musicians to go to Prince Gallitzin's to perform music, and that he would not go with Brunetti because he was ashamed of him. When he arrived, he went up at once to the Prince, made his bow, *and then remained standing and conversing with him.* What, one wonders, did Prince Gallitzin think of this young man ? He was but twenty-five, he was a hired musician, and what business had he to be familiar with great personages ? I am willing to make all allowance for the archbishop, and I have little doubt that he had some reason to dislike a young man who was as bitter and sharp-tongued towards those whom he distrusted as he was affectionate and generous towards those who loved him. But I think that Wolfgang himself gives us the right clue to the situation in that same letter of March 24th, when he says, using a most expressive word, as he sometimes does when he is moved, that the archbishop acted as a *Lichtschild* to him : hid the light from him,

kept him out of the sun. This surely tells the whole story. The master, who ought to have been a help, was a hindrance. The young plant wanted to grow, to feel the sun, and as Aristotle would have said, to realize its end; and this priest kept it in the shade, having no notion whatever that it could put out blooms that the world would for ever prize. The blame was therefore chiefly the archbishop's; he ought to have been more discerning, more human and kindly. We may say that he acted according to the ideas of his age; but to hide the light from a growing plant without even thinking of its bloom, is a crime that we cannot readily forgive, even in an ecclesiastic.

It is worth while to turn from these letters for a moment to compare the treatment of Mozart by the archbishop with the treatment of his friend Haydn by Prince Esterhazy. It was quite possible to be a *grand seigneur* without acting as a *Lichtschirm*. Haydn's position was not absolutely free from the taint of servitude; he had for example to wait in the ante-room of his lord of a morning to hear whether any music was required during the day, much as a coachman or stud-groom comes to his master's room for orders. He had to attend to the manners, morals, and even the dress of his band. But in Nicolas Esterhazy, for whom he worked for many years, he had a genial and sympathetic Prince whom he dearly loved: he had leisure and tranquility: as Pohl remarks, he never had to go through the drudgery of lesson giving, by which Mozart had to eke out a subsistence during his whole artistic life. Above all, the Schloss was not so far away from Vienna, and the family were often in their town-house there. Assuredly the Prince never acted as a *Lichtschirm* to this great genius, and the name of Haydn was already, when Mozart was in Vienna in 1781, well-known all over Europe. Even in 1773 Burney knew it well and honoured it.

The emancipation from the Archbishop brought with it an emancipation from his father's authority, for Leopold unfortunately took the part of the tyrant, and the son had to wrestle valiantly for his liberty against this unholy alliance. It is greatly to his credit that he continued for months to write to his father without breaking with him; simply entreating him to be reasonable, not to believe all the gossip and slander which enemies at Salzburg spread abroad about him,—to believe in his son and in the wholesome effect of freedom on his genius, of which Munich and *Idomeneo* should have shown him some proof. But Leopold could not or would not wholly confide in his son, and the engagement with Constanze Weber which followed in a few months raised fresh difficulties between them. In the end the son had his way, but the rela-



tions between the two were never again quite what they had been. It could not but be so, if the father persisted in his efforts to regulate his son's life. But only those who have read the correspondence between them can understand what a shadow this cast over those otherwise happy months of freedom and courtship. The father was the one friend on whom Wolfgang had relied all his life with devoted affection, and when at last this cloud came between them the pain was great for both.

Beyond all doubt the father was now in the wrong in trying to recall his son to a home of limited opportunities in a dull provincial town. Leopold misjudged the whole question between them, because he did not really understand his son's genius. He knew Wolfgang's faults well, but he did not see that they would diminish rather than increase when free play was given to the creative faculty of the artist. He did not realise what self-expression meant in a composer; his standard of excellence was that of the ordinary musician of the day, whose musical ideas never found wings to lift them from the ground. Glimpses of heaven never came to him from music; he could not add perfect truth and beauty to the Christian goodness that ruled his life. Behind the outward forms of music there lay for him no divine spirit, such as inspired the masterpieces that from 1782 onwards were matured in his son's mind. He lived to hear or to study some few of these, but I cannot find in his letters any certain sign that he really recognised their precious quality as Joseph Haydn did.

After his settlement in Vienna Mozart's journeys came to an end for some years, and henceforward he did not meet with any persons of real historical importance. Joseph II he came, of course, to know as well as such a man can know an Emperor; and in 1787, on the death of Gluck, Joseph appointed him Imperial Court Composer, with a salary of about £80 a year, in return for which he had, like Beethoven after him, to write any number of dances for the court balls. Frederick William of Prussia, who had succeeded Frederick the Great, was the hero of his last brief journey in 1789, gave him an order for string quartets, and offered him quite a sufficient salary to settle in Berlin,—in vain, for Mozart considered the claim of his own Emperor paramount. Of this journey we know something from his letters to his wife, letters so genuinely loving that it is certain that he had not tired of eight years' married life. We have also a beautiful little portrait of him drawn in crayons by a lady at Dresden, which is undoubtedly one of the best likenesses that have come down to us. And there is also one little reminiscence of the man which I must extract from Otto Jahn, for it is due to the one man of eminence in German literature whom

he met in later life, Ludwig Tieck, known to all lovers of Brahms as the poet of the Magelone lyrics. The place was Berlin, and the date towards the end of May. The young Tieck was a great admirer of Mozart's works, having a soul equal to the perception of poetry as distinct from verse-making.

"Entering the theatre, as his custom was, long before the performance began, and while it was still empty and half lighted, he perceived a strange man in the orchestra. He was short, quick, restless, and weak-eyed,—an insignificant figure in a grey overcoat. He went from one desk to another, and appeared to be hastily looking through the music placed on them. Tieck at once entered into conversation with him. They talked of the orchestra, the theatre, the opera, the public taste. He expressed his opinions without reserve, and declared his enthusiastic admiration for Mozart's operas.

'Do you really hear Mozart's operas often, and love them?' asked the stranger,—'that is very good of you, young sir.'

They talked for some time longer; the theatre began to fill, and at last the stranger was called away from the stage. His talk had produced a singular effect upon Ludwig, who made enquiries about him, and learnt that it was Mozart himself, the great master, who had conversed with him and thanked him."

Tieck never saw him again; eighteen months later Mozart died at Vienna, just before completing his thirty-sixth year.

W. WARDE FOWLER.

## SOME THOUGHTS ON SINGING

THERE are many human beings who do not like music, there are none who do not possess a musical instrument. Whether we want it or not, Nature has given us all a voice, and whether it is good or bad there comes a period when, openly or by stealth, we lift it up and compare it with the voices of our fellows. Instinct drives us to make the discovery whether we can or cannot sing. We may draw the wrong inference from the experiment, but an interest has been awakened in singing, if not in our own, then in that of others, which is never wholly extinguished.

Cups will continue to clatter and conversation to buzz while a pianist plays, but at the sound of a voice singing, there is silence, and after silence criticism, for we listen to that which all of us in the secrecy of our hearts think we too could do if nature or circumstances had dealt fairly with us. There is in short no artistic gift so nearly universal as that of song. Folk song is the most obvious illustration of this truth. In primitive communities men, women and children all sing, and in some mysterious way songs arise with melodies rarely wanting in some sort of rude beauty, by which the musical instinct is satisfied.

From such songs the whole art of music has sprung. The fact is familiar enough. The point to be drawn from it for us to-day is this, that in any revival of music which aspires to be national, and we are witnessing such a revival now, vocal music is bound to play the chief part. That in the first two numbers of this Magazine two articles were devoted to the "Future of Song" is a fact of happy significance. For good or for evil the music of a country is more profoundly influenced by its songs and its singers than by any other form of music or by any other performers. It lies in the nature of things that this should be so.

In all the changes therefore which have so rapidly brought a new outlook for English music, none are so rich in hope as those which have befallen English song. It is needless to enlarge upon them here, to go over ground which is already familiar. In this article it is taken for granted that there are at last songs in plenty which educated men and women can love to sing and love to hear, songs whose words are the words of poetry and whose music is the music

of musicians. Our concern is not primarily with songs, but with singers.

Like everything else the profession of singing has changed. It includes within its ranks hundreds of educated men and women who would not have dreamed of becoming singers fifty years ago, who would have shrunk from a career, in which they would be judged by their voices alone and the skill with which they used them. In this, if their powers did not lie in the direction of opera or oratorio, they would be condemned to sing for the most part, year after year a small repertory of songs which they despised, or which through endless reiteration were bound to become stale and meaningless. To be a public singer was to enter musically on a starvation diet.

The vocal recital, now a permanent feature of our musical life, did not exist. The materials for arranging one, or at any rate more than one, hardly existed without plentiful recourse to foreign sources.

To put this aspect of the matter differently, in the days gone by—many of us who are not yet old can remember them—if we went to hear a Patti or a Sims Reeves we knew beforehand all the songs from which their selection would be made. It was the singer, not the songs, which formed the centre of interest, the beauty or the power of his voice, his style, his skill, his mastery of the art of singing. To-day we expect a singer out of his large repertory to give us some songs at least which are unfamiliar, and we shall not be surprised if he appeals rather to our musical and poetical understanding than to our sensuous pleasure in vocal sound.

Whereas the older type of singers never ventured on songs which did not display their voices advantageously, there is many a modern singer who by temperament and a laudable spirit of adventure is drawn most to those which give scope to his imagination, his feeling, his interpretative powers.

This rough contrast has been drawn neither to depreciate the old singers nor to extol the new, merely to mark in an exaggerated and general way the change of outlook which a very short period of time has brought. It gives to singers a position among musicians which they have never held before: a position, in which, if they awake to its opportunities and responsibilities, they will become the strongest force for musical progress in England. They owe it to the labour of those who have unearthed treasures of English song long buried in the dust of libraries; of those who have caught the folk song, just before it expired, from the lips of the aged peasants whose memories alone preserved it; of those who by their compositions have lifted song out of the degradation into which it had

fallen to its rightful place of honour ; of those singers and teachers, once a very small band, who have never lowered their flag, in order to enjoy by the sacrifice of their musical ideals a cheaply won popularity, and finally of that portion of the public and of the press which has given to all of them its support and encouragement.

There is another side to the picture to which it is folly to close our eyes. Every gain, Emerson tells us, brings its corresponding loss. In reaching forward to higher ideals of song on its musical and interpretative side we have gradually been dropping the high ideal which used to prevail on the technical side. As craftsmen we have gone down no less steadily than as musicians we have gone up. The horizon has narrowed in the one direction in proportion as it has broadened in the other. We sing more songs and better, but our voices are less good, less cunning, and alas ! less durable. Many will smile at this statement as the familiar wail of the *laudator temporis acti*. They are invited to the following simple reflection. It is possible to fix with tolerable precision the period (it lies within the lifetime of many of us) when notes which were forced, harsh, or out of tune were first heard from public singers ; to-day singers are actually praised by critics because blemishes of this kind are absent. Once these were heard in public with a shudder ; now they are either accepted with complacency, or condoned because the singer is "so artistic." This is to give a new meaning to the word ; in the *Oxford Dictionary* art is defined as "skill, especially human skill, as opposed to nature ; skilful execution as an object in itself." Without art in this sense neither a violinist nor a pianist nor an orchestra has the faintest chance of recognition, whatever other qualities they may possess. Singers are alone in obtaining concessions which are as fatal to their art as they are humiliating to themselves. It is true that art in its full sense involves more than an excellent technique : it is not true that it can exist without it. We are still suffering from a reaction, as inevitable as, in one aspect, it has been wholesome, against the soul-destroying supremacy of virtuosity ; but it has gone too far. The lost ground must be recovered. It was not virtuosity that was wrong, it was the application of it to purposes of self-glorification instead of to the service of music. The music by which it was fed, forgetting the noble traditions of its early days, and ministering more and more to the vanity of singers and to the shallowest elements of the popular taste eventually perished of its own rottenness, unwept, unhonoured and unsung. There is nothing to regret but the loss of the skill which enabled such music to be sung at all. We are apt to forget that this skill, though it spent itself too largely on senseless roulades and trills and acrobatic



feats, could also glorify a simple melody, that it could declaim, that it could sing Handel as well as Donizetti, and if it were with us still, could do for Bach and for Purcell what we can imagine but cannot hear—and who knows what else for Schubert and Brahms, or even Debussy?

The old art of singing was founded on one true and quite obvious fact, neatly conveyed by Madame Suggia in her article on the violoncello "A noise is not music, neither can a simple musical phrase be beautiful which contains any sound other than a beautiful sound." It cannot be said that the art of singing is founded on that fact to-day. Quantity has been substituted for quality, beauty plays only a subordinate part. Indeed, it is often possible for a sensitive person to enjoy a song only by listening to the accompaniment and trying to hear as little of the singer as possible except the words which make the accompaniment intelligible. As Wagner once said at Bayreuth "We don't want any singing here." It is significant of the extent to which singing as an art has fallen into disrepute that the tendency of composers to transfer the centre of interest from the voice to the piano or the orchestra has grown more marked with every year; it is not even considered necessary that they should understand either what a voice can legitimately be asked to do or the special characteristics which distinguish the voices of one class from the voices of another. Many songs seem to have been composed for no voice in particular, but are published in several keys that they may be sung by all voices, as though a contralto song if transposed into a high enough key would suit a light soprano. The needs of pianists and violinists, indeed of all instrumental players, are carefully studied and well understood; the needs of singers are not.

There is a fault also on the singers' side. In the enthusiasm born of the opening out of a new world of song they plunge into the music which has most attraction for them; they forget that each voice has not only its natural limitations but others possibly which are due to insufficient technical study. In programmes for vocal recitals songs too often appear which are as plainly unsuited to the singers' powers as to the natural quality or range of their voices.

The unnecessary and undesirable length of most recitals only serves to emphasise the folly of exhibiting to the public work which by the nature of things is doomed to fail. Moreover it is precisely work of this kind that steadily undermines the freshness and beauty of voices and leads the art of singing into disrepute.

The evils have a far-reaching effect both upon students who naturally follow the lead of those who have passed out of a state of pupillage and upon the public whose ear is first bewildered and

suspicious, and gradually, taking for granted that those who perform to it must know their business best, grows insensitive and callous. The public is aware, too, that among teachers there is anything but unanimity on questions relating to the use of the voice and its training, and attributes to this fact the perplexing variety of sounds and of styles presented to it. Now to art, if it is to be healthy, a critical and intelligent public is as vital as a strong Opposition to the House of Commons. An ignorant and undiscerning public or a complacent and apathetic public will drag any standard down. We of to-day are waking up in the matter of songs, but are fast asleep in the matter of singing. If on Monday violence is accepted for power, tremolo for emotion, unbalanced musical temperament for an artist's skill, what good is it if the public does recognise the real thing on Friday? If singers draw the natural conclusion, are they altogether to blame?

It seems to be fixed ineradicably in the English mind that singing is play, not work; easy not difficult; that it involves little sacrifice of time and need not interfere with the endless distractions and trivialities of our social life; that the main duty of a student is to give pleasure by singing whatever their friends ask whenever they ask it—in fact, that any advice given in the pupil-room may be safely disregarded at home.

One more point, obvious but overlooked. Art aspires to permanence, to live beyond the day of its creation or of its popularity; history tells us with unpalatable truth that neither imagination nor intellect nor any other gift imparts more than a transient life to work which lacks the hall-mark of sound and honest workmanship. It is true that the singer's art, like that of the actor or dancer, perishes with him, to survive at most for a time perhaps in the memories of those who heard him and of those who learned from him. It is his duty, as it is his interest, to preserve both his voice and his skill as long as health and strength remains. He is only half an artist, whose want of craftsmanship cuts his career short, and makes the world believe that it is abnormal for these to last even up to the threshold of old age.

An atmosphere has been created which is very difficult for those who believe that a higher ideal of technique, with all that it involves of discipline, labour, and self-sacrifice is the crying need of the time. Some reasons have been given for this belief, but another remains, which is perhaps the most grave of all—the appalling wastage of voices, which is going on in every part of England, but which in the absence of statistics, is little known or little heeded. Anyone who says that good voices are rare in this country says what is not true. Judges at competitions and examiners for cer-

tificates, scholarships and diplomas know something of the abundant promise scattered over the length and breadth of the country. But most of it is doomed to unfulfilment, even to irretrievable ruin, not through lack of natural gift or beauty or strength, but through ignorance and stupidity which is almost beyond belief.

A heartrending chapter could be written upon lives which have been blighted because voices were destroyed in youth. Nature is rarely to blame. The most gifted are commonly the victims. There is a curious belief that singing can be taught by those who cannot sing, who have never studied, who have no personal experience of what a singer's difficulties are. Yet it would be hard to name a subject which can so little afford to dispense with practical illustration. A young singer who wanted pupils was advised by a well-known composer to put a brass plate on his door which should inform the public that he was an "organist, teacher of harmony and counterpoint," and assured him that people would flock to enquire whether he gave lessons in singing. There are probably more teachers of singing to-day who cannot sing than teachers who can. As things are at present it is inevitable that this should be the case, simply because there are not enough teachers who are also singers to go round, and there cannot be enough so long as the technique of singing is thought so little of, or so widely misunderstood as it is. There are places without number where the obvious and often the only person to give lessons in singing is the organist, not because he is really qualified, or because he has trained a choir, but because he represents the best musical influence in his neighbourhood. If he would only be content to be a musical influence, raise the deplorable level of the taste in song, teach his pupils to breathe, to pronounce their words clearly and intelligently, choose songs with regard to their voices, their age and their physical strength, get them to sing them in tune, in time and, as far as he can, in a simple unaffected way, he might do some good and little harm. At any rate the promising voices which fall into his hands would, when they pass later on to trained teachers, be still fresh and undamaged. In the hands of the theoretical voice-producer who cannot sing, but undertakes to train singers, they are in the deadliest peril.

There is much that could be added, but it concerns the profession of teaching and our musical institutions rather than the public. When reforms come, they will come, if experience is a trustworthy guide, through pressure from without rather than from within; the particular points emphasised were chosen because of this belief and because they seemed to be those around which controversy was least likely to be raised.



That the sphere of opera has not been mentioned is due to no lack of appreciation of the fine work which English singers are doing on the stage. The level of singing is higher there than elsewhere, often very high indeed. But the influence of song in the concert hall and especially the home is bound to be more widespread and for that reason more important for a long time to come.

In spite of all which now seems discouraging, the future is big with hope, rich in opportunities which seemed impossible only a short time ago. We are now at the cross-roads in singing, and with our practical common sense we shall step out in the right direction when once we are clear what that is. Because technique in its madness once nearly destroyed one side of the art of singing, we are not now going to let the lack of it destroy the other. When we have recovered from the excitement, which is inevitable in all revivals, we shall settle down and found an English School of Singing, in which it will be recognised that the highest ideals of music are inseparable from equally high ideals of technique.

WALTER FORD.

## Church Music

### ON PSALM-CHANTING

THERE are two people who will think that a discussion of Psalm-chanting is unnecessary, one is the man for whom the ancient Tones are the correct thing (whether he really likes them or not), and the other is the man who has grown up with the Anglican chant and never questions its fitness. With the former I do not quarrel, but the latter needs conversion badly. Yet I hope to be able to show that the process does not necessitate the desertion of his first love, only its conversion along with his own.

Mr. Robert Bridges re-opened the whole subject of Anglican chanting and its possibilities by his two scholarly papers in the *Musical Antiquary* of April, 1911, and January, 1912, and in *The Prayerbook Dictionary* (1912): articles *Chant, Anglican* and *Chanting*. Unfortunately for the influence of his suggestions the *Musical Antiquary* is not seen and read by many practising choir-masters: but to the few his papers revealed effects of rhythm hitherto unsuspected within the bounds of so stiff a framework as the Anglican chant. His main principle, which he worked out and established with a wealth of detail, is that the rhythm of the words as uttered in ordinary speech must be the foundation of all good chanting. How far that principle is from performance all know whose musical sense is disturbed and whose literary feelings outraged whether the Psalms are sung to Gregorian melodies or to Anglican chants.

Dr. C. W. Pearce is another who has been moved to write on the subject. But Anglican chanting, as performed, has so disturbed him that he has become a "root-and-brancher," out to demonstrate the "Futility of the Anglican Chant" by his recent lecture, and bent on divorcing it from the Psalms if he can. He will find it as difficult as others have found it before him, for the Anglican chant has come to stay. Mr. Bridges speaks of the "essential fitness of this naturally developed form" as being "hypothetically probable," and that judgment, together with the suggestiveness of his two essays, makes it possible to regard Dr. Pearce's heroic

measure as being not the only remedy for the distressful condition of so much of the Anglican chanting of to-day.

Both these eminent authorities are endeavouring to meet the same difficulty, and it will be well to diagnose the trouble before deciding which to follow, and whether to kill or cure. And the main trouble is that in every Psalm varying speech-rhythms must be sung to an unvarying melody. This is true of both the rival systems. The Tones almost meet the difficulty from the very fact that their melodies are all but formless, theoretically capable of accenting any note except the final, thus allowing for almost every variety of verbal accent. But in practice rules have to be made and exceptions allowed for in order to fit syllables to notes, because theory will not allow us to do what we would. For example, set the first two verses of Venite to "Tone 1" with the fourth ending, and sing note to syllable with correct verbal accentuation. The melody will be varied with beautiful effect, but the Plain-chant theorist will be shocked if in the second verse we ask him to transfer to the final the stress which should come on the penultimate; and what will he say to "thanksgiving" with its ante-penultimate accent as pronounced in speech?

A            A G A        A            A G F G A  
O come . . . unto the Lord : let us . . . of our salvation

A            A G A        A            A G F G A  
Let us . . . thanksgiving : and show . . glad in him with psalms.

In its Anglican form this melody receives fixed accents, and inherits the long penultimate which now becomes a semibreve divided into two minims, and the difficulty reappears in an altered form: for if the speech accent of "salvation" is to be preserved, either its penultimate syllable must be sung to the whole semibreve, or its two last syllables must be sung to the final. Mr. Bridges has demonstrated that it will not bear the first treatment, and the second rouses the derision of Dr. Pearce. "Thanksgiving" again presents a problem for solution, but the second half of verse 2 comes right. So that under either system there must be "accommodation" even in setting the first two verses of the psalm that is sung or said every day in the year except one. How much more when it comes to setting the other 2,500 verses of the Psalms, to say nothing of the Canticles?

This example has brought us up against the fact that the two systems are irreconcilable, their difference is fundamental. The Tones have a penultimate stress in the final cadence, Anglican chants have the final accent on the final note. As a matter of

musical history this represents a development of musical sense, and though it may have been the occasion of "degradation" of chant-form, yet the "invention" of the perfect cadence was the outcome of musical evolution. And its influence has been so strong that the attempt to return to the Tones in singing the Psalms in English has proved a failure. It has not been found possible to eliminate the feeling for the final accent from the mind of choir or congregation. The pendulum has swung too far, and when Dr. Pearce asks why worry about making the best of the substitute (Chant) when the real thing (Tone) is to be had, he is sufficiently answered by the fact that the idiom of the "real thing" is by now out of the ken of all but the expert. And when the Tones are sung by the inexperienced, they justify Sir Walter Parratt in his famous dictum that "Groanorians make me want to lie down and howl."

The fact must be recognised as a fact that the Tones came into being and developed for the purpose of singing Latin words, and in Latin a penultimate accent occurs with far greater frequency than any other: whereas in the English Psalter the accent falls on the final syllable on an average in forty-five verses out of every hundred.

It was the realisation of this difference between Latin, to which they were accustomed, and English, which they were ordered to use, that caused most of the difficulty experienced by the great masters of the Reformation period of English music. They found themselves faced with a new and unaccustomed speech-rhythm for which a new musical idiom had to be created. And when the additional burden was imposed upon them of setting a note to a syllable, even these great ones quailed. Merbecke, the first of them, solved the difficulty in somewhat drastic fashion by setting all the Psalms to one Tone with its simplest ending, a solution which would surely kill all chanting by its very monotony. The experiments of the sixteenth century are disappointing to one who seeks the beginnings of the Anglican chant, though interesting in many ways. They show clearly a line of development in psalm-setting, but it is away from the set form of a chant. The nearest to that is provided by Tallis, who retains the Tone-melody in the tenor, and surrounds it with note for note counterpoint. Gibbons, at the other end of the period, treats his Psalms as freely as the Canticles. Byrd occupies a position between them, at one time taking a Tone melody and treating it with freedom, at other times inventing his own. But all are alike in their strong sense for true verbal accent, varying the steady flow of their minims with semibreves and an occasional crochet so as to preserve the speech-rhythm as nearly as is possible in measured music.

TALLIE.

1 Thou hast re-buk - ed the proud and curs - ed

are they that doe erre from Thy com - mand - e - ments.

TALLIE.

2 My soul cleav - eth to the dust

O quick-en Thou me ac - cor - - ding to Thy word.

BRD.

3 Ye moun - tains that ye skip - ped like rams, and

ye lit - tle hills like young sheep.

BRAD.

4 And I said O that I had wings like a dove

for then would I flee a way and be at rest. and be at rest.

It is doubtful if the Psalms were chanted on ferial days at any time between 1540 and 1660. The set Psalms that have come down to us are almost all Proper of Festivals, and the method of their setting must have been beyond the capacity of any but the greater choirs. There were not so many "choirs and places where they sing" in those days, Cathedrals and College Chapels and the Chapels Royal alone having facilities for a musical service, so that the practice or art of chanting was by no means general. In Parish Churches the Psalms were probably read not sung, the reading often resolving itself into a duet between parson and clerk, in many cases the only two who could read in a whole parish. What singing there was could only have been of the metrical form of the Psalms, which seems to have won immediate favour, partly because it was more easily committed to memory, and largely because of the popular character of the tunes invented for it at home or borrowed from abroad.

Thus the difficulty of chanting the Psalms in English was generally solved by the evading of it, and remained a luxury practised by but few and that only tentatively, until the day came when choir-services, together with their necessary accompaniment of choir-books and organs, were swept out of existence. With the Restoration came revival, but with a difference. The ancient art was lost, or deliberately set aside as obsolete in face of the new-fashioned music introduced from the continent in deference to Royal taste. The Anglican chant proper then made its appearance in a new stage of experiment. Its fixed rhythm, as we know it, did not arrive at fixity for some time after the form was evolved.



Mr. Bridges gives examples which show clearly that the final accent was not yet established, though the influence of the metrical Psalm-tunes made it inevitable: the barring varies, and, if it really was used to define accent, not merely to keep the parts together, points to much hesitation to forsake the traditional penultimate stress of the Tones for the new-found and native full close. There are theorists who maintain that the notes of a cadence take weight from the final, while others rejoin that the very name suggests the falling of notes to a point of rest, thus adding weight to the final. Which-ever is right in theory, it is indisputable that nowadays that point of repose is all-important, and the final, from being an essentially weak note, has become the strongest note of the whole chant.

And it is here that two schools of Anglican chanting part company. Is the final accent of the words to coincide with that of the chant? Mr. Bridges says "yes," however many "hangers" it may have (to adopt his expressive name for the unaccented syllables which may follow it). Dr. Pearce says "no" and pours upon the practice a whole dictionary of derisive epithets. Dr. Pearce may be congratulated on his courage, for it takes a bold man to stand up to Mr. Bridges on a point of English verbal rhythm: more especially the rhythm of the Psalms, for few have studied them as closely as he. Furthermore, he has come to the conclusion that there is a fitness in using Anglican chants for the Psalms in English, and he knows more about chants than most people. But it must be conceded to Dr. Pearce that Anglican chants, as generally sung, ruin the rhythm of the words in nine verses out of ten, though the same may be said of the Tones, as generally sung. Too many choirs seem to be trained in the idea that the tune is the thing, good diction taking the second place in importance, and word-rhythm nowhere. The cart is before the horse: and while the rhythm of the seven-barred musical sentence is beaten out with stolidity, the words are crushed into the cast-iron form, or stretched like jujubes (the word comes from Dr. Walford Davies), regardless of their natural feelings. No wonder Hubert Parry fled from church because of it. Such treatment of any words is literally preposterous, and when the words are those of the Psalms becomes little short of profane. But why judge anything by the worst of its kind, or pass sweeping condemnation on a system because the majority of its practitioners are inconsiderate or hide-bound by a bad tradition? There is much to be said for those who endeavour to find a remedy which stops short of killing the patient. And where is the remedy for bad chanting to be sought and, as some of us believe, to be found? Since the rhythm of the words is fixed and unalterable we are precluded from attempting to adapt it to

BYRD.

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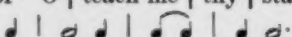
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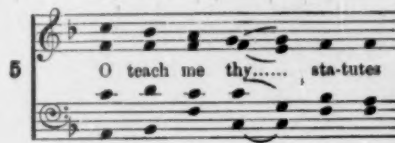
the chant-rhythm, and we are left with the task of trying to accommodate the music to the words.

We must suppose the recitation sung with correct speech-rhythm induced by reading before singing, and deal only with the measured music. And the first thing to do is to forget that a minim is a minim. Let it be considered only a symbol, representing a note of definite pitch but of indefinite length, so as to become receptive of the longest syllable or the shortest, and, where advisable, of more syllables than one. The same with the semibreve (and a crochet, but it is preferable to do without crochets): reduce the monster, if necessary, even to the length of a crochet or thereabout, so that such a phrase as "according to thy word" may be sung as it is spoken. We must get rid of the idea of an imaginary bar before the measured music: it has been a catastrophe, however well intentioned its invention. And in a good chant there is nothing against such shortening.

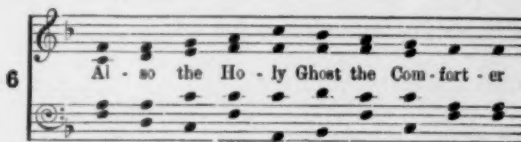
Then we must break down the tyranny of the tradition of a note to a syllable. This has already been done by the operation of common sense, and by common consent in most modern Psalters, but the protagonists have perhaps been a little over-timid. If we may sing " | presence with | thanksgiving " we may also sing " | caterpillars in | -numerable." This is a logical sequel. The syllables take no more time to sing, and the pointing is rhythmically correct. Stretch the first note of the bar and shorten the second, and the thing is done. So with a thousand other instances that might be adduced. Stretch or contract the notes but not the words. There is no exception to this principle, even when two notes must be set to one syllable. Shorten the notes, and the rhythm of " O | teach me | thy | statutes " becomes approximately equal to . This word "approximately" must be kept in mind throughout, the ubiquitous minim being elastic, as already suggested, and a crochet being regarded as only a little less than a minim, not the exact half of it. *Let the words decide the rhythm.* But with the following caveat—Chanting in ordinary speech-rhythm would result in unseemly hurrying. Therefore the speed of chanting should be the speed of *deliberate* speaking. Such a speed will, and must, be faster than that usually practised, but all syllables must be sung with due deliberation or there will be loss of dignity. Subtle differences of length or stress cannot be defined and determined by any known system of musical notation. Nor is it desirable, even if it were possible, for none would desire to destroy the individual sense of the delicate variations of English speech-rhythm by substituting a new form of strait-waistcoat for the old. The nearest approach to an ideal system of chant-notation

is that of the chant-book of the *Barless Psalter*. There only one note-form (a crochet without a tail) is used, giving the impression at once that each note is of quite indefinite length.

Perhaps enough has been said as to the treatment of the final. For the contention of Mr. Bridges may be accepted without reserve, that the final main accent of the speech-rhythm should coincide with the final accent of the chant, "hangers" or none. But the irritation caused by a double knock on the last note will be much lessened if the syllables are sung with sufficient deliberation. And a further refinement may be introduced by making all such endings feminine. There can be no objection to the delaying of the final chord by a suspension, if not in the melody then in one of the inner parts. Only the bass must not move.



Nor is this objectionable :—



Any competent organist can do this kind of thing, and an additional advantage will be that the alto or tenor in a choir will begin to find the Psalms really interesting when he realises that his variation adds to the beauty of their rendering and helps to define their rhythmic subtlety—a good argument, if somewhat utilitarian. And by such devices the "thump" is robbed of much of its heaviness.

Short half-verses present the greatest problem of all, which even "note to syllable" will not solve, since there are more notes than syllables. What can be done?

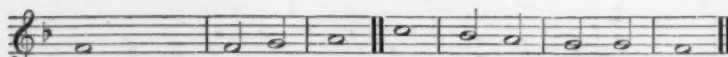
It has been sometimes suggested that Anglican chanting should take a leaf out of the Gregorian book and leave out a superfluous note or two. This is quite possible in many chants without doing too much violence to the harmony. But it would give a shock to a congregation if done without due notice, and it is always difficult to justify interference with a composer's intention, even if it be



agreed that a chant is not the highest species of composition. The possibilities of unisonous singing are not all transferable to singing in harmony, and though at first sight this way out of the difficulty is attractive, yet in practice its disadvantages outweigh its attractions. *Experto crede.*

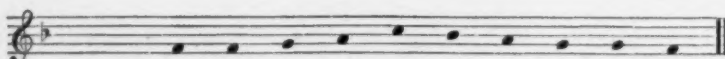
Sometimes two verses may with advantage be run together to form a unit, as for instance *Te Deum* verses 22 and 23, 24 and 25, and *Nunc Dimittis* verses 2 and 3. And very occasionally the second half of the chant sentence may be repeated. If done in the middle of a Psalm, this expedient would probably sound fidgety, but for a Psalm-ending the effect may be altogether good. Such repetition of a fragment of the music produces emphasis and is excellent for Psalm xix, 15. The only objection to this would be raised by those who seem to regard the dividing colon as sacrosanct. Traditional it is; but sanctity derived from custom rests on insecure foundations. Of course, where the colon marks the division of the parallel clauses of Hebrew poetry it should not be wantonly interfered with. But there is seldom true parallelism in the short verses.

Wherever the speech-rhythm will allow, probably the most satisfactory way of treating these is to make the whole chant-sentence a unit. Run through the double bar and the colon, so that the two middle semibreves become one bar of two minims, then, remembering that all notes are but symbols of pitch, let the words decide the rhythm. Thus, the usual—



My tongue is the pen: of a rea - dy writer  
Namely while they say dai - ly unto me: Where - is now thy God  
Thou art the King of glo - ry: O - - - Christ  
Thine honour - a - ble, true: and on - ly Son  
We believe that thou shalt come: to be our Judge

becomes—



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We be - lieve that thou shalt come: to be our Judge

Most choirs at present take but little interest in the Psalms, with the inevitable result that their performance is but perfunctory at best and the thinking portion of the congregation either has its feelings outraged and relieves those feelings with impotent abuse



of the choir, or else—stays away. But once let a choir feel that the Psalms are full of interest to them as singers because of the variety of rhythm, and the practice of them ceases to be the dull performance it so often is. It becomes lively at once, especially if the choirmaster allows individual suggestion of a thoughtful rendering. The Psalms appeal with new force and take on new life when the choir, men and boys alike, begin to feel that they have a part in interpreting them to a congregation. They will no longer be subordinate to the anthem at practice, for they will come fresh every time and awaken interest instead of deadening it. It is a revelation to a choir when it first hears the beauty of "nei | ther the | moon by | night" the first three syllables forming a true triplet of shortened notes, and falling on to "moon" with the stress demanded both by English speech-rhythm and Hebrew poetic parallelism. Nor will any choirmaster worth his salt grumble if his work before practice is largely increased. He will very soon delight in it, for he will find himself freed from the Procrustean bed of the duple rhythm to which he has thought himself bound. Opportunities for the exercise of initiative in the suggestion of nuances of rhythm will abound week by week, and he will be relieved from feeling that he has to drive an unwilling team even when he announces that the "Choir will now practise the Psalm for the fifteenth evening." Such practising will aim almost exclusively at the attainment of unanimity in speech-rhythm, since one takes for granted that every member of the choir can memorise his part in a chant after one or two repetitions. He will thus be able to concentrate his attention on the words he sings and on the one book he holds in his hands.

One word of warning: a very careful selection of chants will be essential. No chant-book in existence can be accepted as oracular. And when the suggested chant seems to make the rendering of the words in true speech-rhythm more difficult than it need be, the chant must go and another be found.

And one golden rule: Read every verse deliberately with the natural rhythm of ordinary speech before trying to sing it: then try to sing each verse in the rhythm of deliberate natural speech.

A. RAMSBOTHAM.

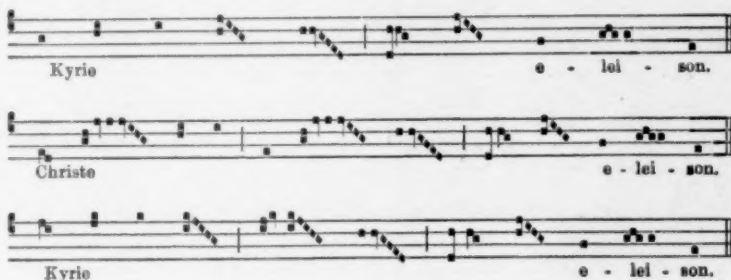
## BACH'S VORSPIELE OF 1739.

AMONG the few works published by Bach in his lifetime was the *Clavierübung*, containing compositions for clavier and for organ. The third book, of the four comprised in the work (1739), contained a set of choral preludes arranged on a liturgical plan. This plan is lost when these preludes are (as is usually the case) combined with Bach's other *Choralvorspiele* and arranged in a mere alphabetical order: but the loss is a serious one, and it is worth while to call attention to this liturgical series, its plan and its sources. The plan is simple: two choral preludes, one elaborate and one simple, are provided for each of the following series, except the second, where there are three provided—*Kyrie*, *Gloria in excelsis*, Ten Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Penitence, Holy Communion. The group forms, as it were, a service, set out in *Choralvorspiele*. The series itself is, in Bach's plan, introduced by a prelude and closed by a fugue, serving as opening and closing "voluntaries." The prelude and fugue will be found in the Peters Edition of Bach's Organ Works edited by Griepenkerl and Roitzsch as the first items in vol. III. The *Choralvorspiele* are scattered about in vols. V—VII. They are equally scattered in the popular edition published by the *Bachgesellschaft*; in the original series of the *Gesellschaft* (vol. I of the *Clavierwerke*) the *Clavierübung* is given in its original arrangement, and this is also the case with Novello's edition, Book XVI.

The series follows for the most part the line of the Lutheran *Hauptgottesdienst* or mass. The *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, Creed and Communion hymns formed part of the regular use of the Leipzig pair of churches which Bach served. [See the *Leipziger Kirchenandachten* of 1694 as described by Lilienkron in his *Liturgisch-Musikalische Geschichte der Evangelischen Gottesdienste* (Schleswig, 1893), cap. XII.] But this comparison only accounts for half the items of the series. It is quite possible therefore that Schweitzer is right in emphasizing the words in the title "containing various preludes upon the catechism hymns and others" and therefore connecting the collection rather with the catechism, than with the *Hauptgottesdienst*. But this does not account for the two first items. However that may be, the connexion of this tradition with the pre-reformation services will be more clear if we enquire into the origin of Bach's themes. They not only belong to the Lutheran liturgical tradition, but many of them run back to medieval times.

*Kyrie*. The two settings [Peters edition, VII, 39 (a, b, c) and 40

(a, b, c)] rest upon the *Kyrie fons bonitatis* (Vatican Gradual, no. II) which was adapted to German words for the Lutheran Erfurt *Kirchenamt* of 1515.\* But Bach keeps closer to the original, as will be seen by comparing his *canto fermo* with the following. The first prelude (a) deals with the first *Kyrie-eleison*, the second (b) with the *Christe-eleison*, and the third (c) with the ninth and fullest *Kyrie-eleison*. In (a) the *canto fermo*, much broken up, is in the soprano, in (b) it is in the tenor, in (c) it is in the bass, that is to



say, in the greater setting. In the lesser setting (marked *alio modo*) there is only slight reference to the themes.

*Gloria in excelsis*. The well-known choral-melody *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'* belongs to the German version of the *Gloria in excelsis*, and serves Bach as *canto fermo* (Peters, VI, 5, etc.) for the next three preludes. The source is the following plainsong setting. Intermediate between the plainsong and the choral is a free adaptation of the plainsong to German words which is found in early Lutheran orders. It is illuminating to set the three side by side.

Vatican Gradual No. I.

The image shows musical notation for the Vatican Gradual No. I. It includes a plainsong setting on a single staff with square notes and a German adaptation on two staves with round notes. The text 'Zahn 8618.' is written between the staves.

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - o:

Zahn 8618.

All Ehr und Lob soll Got - tes sein; Er ist und heisst der Höchst al - lein;

Al - lein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr', und Dank für sei - ne Gna - de,

\* See J. Zahn, *Melodie der deutschen Evangelischen Kirchenlieder*, No. 8600a.

et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus

sein Zorn auf Er - den hab ein End; sein Fried und Gnad sich zu uns wend.

Dar - um dass nun und nimmer mehr uns rüh - ren kann kein Scha - de.

bo - nae vo - lun - ta - tis

Den Menschen das ge - fal - le wohl, da - für man herz - lich dank - en soll.

Lau - da - mus te, Be - ne - di - ci - mus te,

Ach, lieb - er Gott, dich lob - en wir, und preis - en dich mit ganz - er Gier,

Ein whol gefalln Gott an uns hat; nun ist gross Fried ohn Un - ter - lass,

Ad - or - a - mus te Glo - ri - ficamus, &c.

auch knie - end wir an - bet - en dich, dein Ehr wir, &c.

all Fehde hat nun kein En - de.

In the first prelude the melody is in the alto in the form given above, but in the key of F: the *canto fermo* alone forms the middle part of the trio. The second prelude is also a trio, but it is in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time; the first two lines of the melody are in the alto, and the similar third and fourth lines follow in the soprano, and the fifth similarly: the sixth line is in the alto, while the seventh is repeated

three times in the soprano. But the *canto fermo* only appears at intervals, and between whiles all the three voices are busy with the development. The third form of prelude is a brief fughetta upon different themes.

*Commandments.* The theme of these preludes (Peters, vi, 19, 20) is drawn from a medieval pilgrimage song *In Gottes Namen fahren wir* which at the time of the Reformation was set to the hymn *Dies sind die heiligen zehn Gebot* in the Erfurt *Encheiridion*, of 1524. The Lutheran forms may be seen in Zahn 1951 and the Catholic forms in Bäumker, i, 295.\* The old form—long metre, with a final Kyrieleison—is retained. The melody in G minor with a flat seventh, is simple even to dullness.

*Creed.* The theme of these preludes (Peters, vii, 60, 61) goes back to a medieval summary form of the creed and the melody thereto belonging. This is given by Meister in facsimile (No. vi) from a MS. of the early part of the XV century. Various vernacular adaptations were made and one is clumsily associated with the Latin in the source used by Meister.† His facsimile is not satisfactory, but may be further elucidated by reference to Bäumker, i, 366. The earliest Lutheran form is given in Zahn 7971. There are considerable differences of detail in the later use of the melody and different sets of words both Latin and German. These differences do not concern Bach's prelude, for he refrains here from using the melody as *canto fermo* throughout, and is content with mere references to it. But the reader may be glad to see the forms mentioned, set side by side.

Cre-do in de-um pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, Cre-do et in fi-li-um  
Wir glau-ben in eyn-en Gott Schöp-fer Himmels und der Er-

Wir glau-ben all an eyn-en Gott Schöpfer Himmels und der Er-

sanc-tum do-mi-num, pa-tri-na-tu-ra u-ni-form-em. Cre-do et in  
-den, mit Worten er liess wer-den alle Ding gar in seynem Gebot. Von der zar-ten

-den der sich zum Vater ge-ben hat dass wir seine Kinder werden. Er will uns all-

\* Bäumker, *Das kath. deutsche Kirchenlied* (1886):

† Meister, *Das kath. deutsche Kirchenlied* (1862).



Spi-ri-tum pec-ca-to-rum que(sic)pa-ra-cli-tum, u-tri-que con-sub-stan-ti-alem  
 wart er ge-born Ma-riae der rey-nen aus-er-korn uns zu Trost und aller Christenheit  
 zeit er-näh-ren Leib und Seel auch wohl bewahren Al-lem Un-fall will er weh-ren  
 trin-i-ta-tem in-di-vi-du-am ab u-tro-que flu-en-tem et in  
 Vor uns er wol-de ley-den Ob wir möch-ten ver-mey-den Schwere  
 Kein Leid soll uns wi-der fah-ren Er sor-get für uns hüt't und  
 es-sen-ti-a un-un.  
 Peyn den Tot der Ewig-keit.  
 wacht..... es steht al-les in sei-ner Macht.

*Lord's Prayer.* The well-known *Vater unser* choral (Peters, VII, 52: v. 47) is probably from Luther's hand: and it seems to owe nothing to the traditional plainsong of the *Pater noster*.

The preludes of Baptism and Penitence depend upon later melodies (Peters, VI, 17, 18; *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam*, Zahn 7246; and Peters, VI, 13, 14 *Aus tiefer Noth schres' ich zu dir*, Zahn 4703). But the prelude for Holy Communion (Peters, VI, 30, 33) has for its *canto fermo* the melody of the old Hussite hymn *Jesus Christus unser Heiland* written by John Huss as the acrostich of the verses shews (Dreves, *Analecta Hymnica*, XLV, no. 125). This melody, in a medieval form is given by Dreves (*ibid.* I, p. 192) from a MS. of Hohenfurth in the diocese of Prag, written early in the XV century. His transcription differs considerably from the form found in early printed sources; but these differ considerably from one another and fundamentally the melody is but one (Bäumker, I, no. 381: Zahn 1576, 1433, 1578). Bach follows the lead given by the Erfurt *Encheiridion* of 1524. The Hohenfurth form lies between the two chief later types.



## Erfurt Encheiridion.

Je - sus Christ - us un - ser Hei - land, Der von uns den Gottes Zorn.....wandt,  
Hohenfurth.

Je - sus Christ - us nostra sa - - lus Quod reclam-at om-nis ma - - lus  
Leisentrit (in Bäumker).

O Herr Je - su Christ Gott - es Sohn, Der du von der K - wi - gen Thron

Durch das bit - ter Lei - den sein..... half er uns aus der Höl - len Pein.

No - bis sui ... me - mo - ri - am... de - dit in pa - nis hos - ti - am.

In die welt bist he - rab kom-men, Al - len gleubi - gen zu from - men.

What was in Bach's mind when he made and published this collection, and for what purpose was it intended? Neither the *Hauptgottesdienst* nor the Catechism seems to supply an adequate explanation. If it was for use at a service, it is possible that the preludes were designed to be alternated with the singing. If the Catechism provided the model, the collection would seem to be a sort of Confession of Faith expressed in music. As it is, it seems to combine two ideas, to be of the dogmatic rather than of the liturgical order, but yet to include the idea of worship. This combination of worship and belief may well be what Bach wished to express.

In England these chorales are little known, and we have as yet little analogous to the *Choralvorspiele*, though we have a body of hymn tunes which are now in no respect behind the German chorales in their general popularity and their hold upon the people. By degrees our series of English choral preludes is growing. Sir H. Parry notably made great contributions to it in recent times. Perhaps, as it grows in extent and popularity, it may some day come to be not merely a group of voluntaries but to be capable of some liturgical or dogmatic significance.

Even as it is, a very interesting and edifying programme for an

organ recital might be made for us on the lines of Bach's series. Perhaps it might even include a prelude on a plainsong tune, for some have now come into general use among us. It is curious that at first Lutheranism should have kept more of the old plain chant than Anglicanism, while now recent movements have re-domesticated in Anglicanism a good deal of the simple Gregorian music. But if such preludes are to make their appeal the melody would need to be used very differently from the way in which Bach handled his *Kyrie*.

It was necessary to quote the old *Kyrie* in this article in the old notation in order to shew what a deal of ground has been traversed in order to pass from the gay and lissom original melody to the elephantine tread of Bach's *canto fermo*. From the point of view of intelligibility and of making a recognizable appeal, this deformation of the melody is regrettable. One wonders whether Bach's audience could recognize it in the *Kyrie* as they unquestionably did in the case of the rest of the preludes. If not, the great musical mystic missed his audience, or (more exactly) his audience failed to follow him.

In such a scheme as that of this group of preludes, or of any modern organ recital constructed on similar principles, every thing depends upon the melodies being not only musically recognizable, but also carrying at once with them an association of ideas connected with their words and devotional significance. The melodies are a sort of *Leitmotiv*, each representing a complex of religious experience. It is more easy to recognize this as Bach's intention, now that we have been taught by Schweitzer and others to appreciate his use of *Leitmotiv* in other connexions. For us, "When I survey" might become the *motiv* of the Passion, "Jesus Christ is risen to-day" that of the Resurrection, the *Veni Creator* that of the Holy Spirit, and so forth; and, given another Bach, we might have a set of "dogmatic" Hymn-preludes of our own.

W. H. FRERE.

## HYMN PRELUDES

It is only within the last twenty years that musical people have awakened to the surpassing merits of Bach's Choral Preludes. Knowledge of them was confined to organists, and to not too many of them. So, since many musicians ignore the organ as a musical instrument, these splendid works remained comparatively unknown, and the form was not utilised by other composers. But Brahms,

through his sole posthumous publication, altered this state of affairs. His eleven preludes contain several numbers of great beauty, among which his very last composition *O Welt, ich muss dich lassen*, in particular, is of the most moving character, and takes its place by the side of *Vor deinem Thron*, dictated by Bach under the same solemn circumstances.

Brahms having shown the way, Choral preludes multiplied, and Max Reger and Siegfried Karg Elert produced a large number. Of these two writers it may be said that, as a rule, they are most successful in their soft pieces. Their loud preludes are too often blatant and noisy, and Karg Elert in particular employs certain rushing passages so often that the practice becomes a trick. His soft pieces on the other hand are often very beautiful, and on the whole he is more human than Reger, though the great command of counterpoint possessed by the latter is obvious.

In England many composers have followed and are following the same paths. Conspicuous among them for quantity and quality is the late Sir Hubert Parry. His work is what might have been expected of him, bold, manly and tender, where tenderness is called for. The long sequences so characteristic of his style, and so much criticised, appear in all their vigour and abundance. This was to be looked for, as sequences are perhaps more effective on the organ with its commanding bass than on any other instrument or combination of instruments. It is somewhat to be regretted that he has possibly over-employed certain pedal passages of a conventional type, in which Bach in his early works rejoiced, but later almost entirely gave up. Perhaps two of Parry's most representative preludes in different styles are those on "Ye boundless realms of joy" and "Martyrdom," played at his funeral in St. Paul's (it is said by his own request). We should here welcome Dr. Vaughan Williams's first appearance as an organ composer with his strong *Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Melodies*.

Perhaps English composers are at a disadvantage in setting their native hymn melodies. The metres at the Reformation were limited to D.L.M., D.C.M., etc., and later to these metres cut in half. Moreover such variety of rhythm as the old tunes possessed has been lost by their being flattened out into a series of uniform minims. A similar process was working in Germany, and by the time of Bach the old irregularities had disappeared, but the German metres in use were much more varied, and feminine endings were common. These latter are entirely absent in our old hymns, and indeed the genius of our language seems against them. But the tunes to which the hymns are sung must show a corresponding limitation in variety of rhythm.

The forms adopted by modern composers may all be traced back to the three types—Böhm, Pachelbel, and Buxtehude—which Bach only perfected. Melodic ornamentation comes from Böhm, thematic imitation from Pachelbel, and general freedom of form from Buxtehude. Of course all these have been modified by the later developments of music. Böhm's "coloristic" method has been so individualised by Bach, that much development in this direction would seem unlikely. Parry has written one beautiful piece on these lines, but it is obviously "homage à Bach." Karg Elert gives us specimens of this style, but he wanders so far away from the tune that he has to put special marks on the essential notes to assist the wayfaring man in his search for it. Composers struggle to deprive Pachelbel's form of its stiff formality, but its underlying principles will probably continue to be acted upon in more modern fashion. Buxtehude's practice was so free that it may be developed to any extent that the fancy of the composer may attain. If we are to find a justification for Karg Elert's sarabandes and marches we must look to Buxtehude.

The possibility of a listener recognising the tune under treatment is a question which arises with choral preludes of all periods. In many of Bach's finest pieces the tune is thundered out on the pedal in very long notes. Not many people will recognise it, unless they know both the work and what tune it is founded upon. If the writer may be excused for giving a personal experience, he must confess that for years he played a sonata of Rheinberger's founded on the *Tonus Peregrinus*, without detecting an entrance of the Canto Fermo in breve values, introduced in the most natural way possible with masterly counterpoint encircling it; and this, though it was in the treble and in print before his eyes! Can any listener possibly have detected it? The same considerations apply to the "coloristic" chorals. Parry in his beautiful "Melcombe" prelude gives an embellished form of the melody in the treble, while it is played quietly in its original shape on the pedal. Here again the tune is not obvious.

The fact is that most of the finest preludes only display their full significance when they are played immediately before the hymn they refer to. The tune may not be announced unmistakably, but the atmosphere of the hymn will be present, as it is in so many of Bach's and in "Melcombe." This was probably the original use of the choral prelude, and in an ideal service we should employ it in this fashion. Some English Bachs would be necessary, for the tunes of the German Bach are not generally known here. And would the public stand the re-introduction of the "Middle Voluntary?" I fear not, in this hurrying age. Still it would be worth

while to try such an example as "Melcombe," provided due notice was given to the congregation, and it was understood that the experiment was on approval.

For the present the organist must be content with playing these fine works for their own sakes. He will know he is doing the right thing, and this consciousness should sustain him, even though popular appreciation may for the present be lacking.

ALAN GRAY.

### THE CANTATA IN BEING\*

THE possibility of performing cantatas constructed upon the Bach model occurred to me some years ago when I was experimenting in the congregational singing of chorales with *fauxbourdons* for the choir. At first I thought of trying to do one of the Cantatas of Bach but there seemed none which quite suited the conditions that exist here, so, as the Lancing Dedication Festival was at hand I determined to try to write a cantata myself. Before I go into the details of the actual performance I think I had better give an outline of the cantata. The text of the main portion was taken from Isaiah 60, "Lift up thine eyes, etc.," and the chorale which I combined with this was "All people that on earth do dwell." The first chorus was written in the polyphonic style of Bach, but using all the resources of modern harmony. During the progress of this movement the four lines of the chorale were introduced each line being delivered separately. To this followed a tenor recitative, "Behold I will lift up my hands to the Gentiles," and then followed a duet for two trebles, with two flutes obbligati, "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers," while the altos sang verse three of the hymn, "O enter then his courts with praise." The last chorus I originally intended to be an elaborate figure with the chorale introduced line by line, as in the first chorus; but when I remembered that I had to copy all the parts myself I suddenly thought that a short chorus would sound more effective, so I substituted one single verse of the hymn with eight part counterpoint around it. As soon as the choir parts were copied (there are forty boys in the

\* Mr. Brent Smith writes:—"This is a longish letter about our Cantatas. I have had to do it very quickly, with little time for thinking, even if I could, so you must exercise your discretion . . . I am afraid it is very egotistical, but I did not see how to get the ideas down on paper except by an unvarnished statement of what I did." His letter is here printed just as it stood.—[Ed.]



choir—twenty-two trebles, six altos, six tenors, six basses—the congregation number roughly two hundred and sixty) I had a rehearsal. The choir soon managed their parts but the congregation found great difficulty in taking up their leads, which was not to be wondered at considering that they had to sing off by heart and had to remember that their first lead started on the third beat of the eleventh bar after the choir started. If I had been able to conduct, there would have been no difficulty but as it was my labour seemed wasted. Then I had an idea. I bought an eighteenth-century trumpet and in the seclusion of the Downs and under the cover of dusk I learnt to play it. (There is still a tradition here that the Downs are or were haunted by an evil spirit whose special form of wickedness was howling pitiful parodies of the most noble hymn tunes.)

The knowledge of trumpet playing thus acquired I handed on to the best bugler in the corps and he soon learnt to play the chorale and to count his bars. But now a fresh difficulty arose. If the trumpet started on the third beat, the congregation would be late, therefore it was necessary that the trumpet should start on the first beat as a sort of warning or gathering note for the congregation. This demanded some deft juggling with the music, but there was no real difficulty in that.

Then I had another rehearsal. I placed my trumpeter in a convenient spot and I beat time for him with my left hand; the choir I conducted by a series of admonitory nods transmitted through a mirror. My difficulties were now almost at an end. True, if the trumpet gave an uncertain sound who was to prepare himself to sing, but when the amusement was worn off the certainty of the trumpet increased. And now the congregation, startled by the gathering note, took up their leads with a vigour that amazed me, and in the last line, "Come ye before him and rejoice," where the choir romped through some strange harmonies while the trumpet and congregation pursued their diatonic way, I felt like the fisherman who opened a small bottle and let loose a gigantic genie. The rest of the cantata needs no comment.

The enormous amount of work involved in copying and rehearsing this first cantata led me in subsequent attempts to a simplification of the choruses and to an increase in solo work. The most successful of this type was one I wrote for the Peace Celebrations. In this I dispensed with the trumpet by making a cadence of a very definite rhythm the cue for the congregation. This cantata was founded upon E.H. 478, "Sing praise to God." The first chorus consisted of two verses of the hymn in which the chorale appeared as the bass of a four-part chorus. The next number was a tenor recitative,



"Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed." This was followed by verse three of the hymn given, with change of key and time, to three trebles with hautboy obbligato. Then followed a bass recitative, "Seek ye the Lord," which led into an aria for treble, with violin obbligato, "And ye shall go out with peace." This also was a variation upon the chorale. The last chorus consisted of the last two verses of the hymn, sung (to save the labour of copying) to the music of the first chorus.

I have made many other essays in this form but I have never done all that I should like, partly because of the difficulty of performance but chiefly because of the immense amount of labour involved in copying. But still, these experiments have been to us a delightful game and if they have done nothing else at least they have given boys, too unmusical to join the Choral Society, some idea of the joy of singing in a big chorus.

ALEXANDER BRENT SMITH.

## THE SCOPE OF OPERA.

AN opera should be a compound work of art, not a pleonasm in two separate media.

The modern term "music-drama" implies a false conception of the nature of opera, as though we were to confuse "two horses" with "two-horse-power." For opera is not merely a play with music superimposed, nor is it, ideally (in spite of the enormous mass of evidence to the contrary) the proverbial kind of play in which things too idiotic to be spoken in plain words may be uttered with the additional emphasis lent by music.

That which the drama can adequately express of itself requires no musical embellishment—save in the "property" sense of Shakespeare's hautboys and flourishes without: and that which belongs to the sphere of music requires no mimetic commentary. But music may come to the rescue of drama at the point where words and action begin to fail in subtlety of expression. The true sphere of opera, therefore, begins where drama "aspires towards the condition of music," that is, to become a symbolic rather than a representative art.

In the drama of externals, action and situation are more important than words. A "plot" is devised of incidents and accidents which words, for the most part, merely adumbrate. This kind of drama is little more than a pantomime or cinema-play, the inner world being only apparent in so far as it is represented by surface appearances. But the germ of the psychological drama is a spiritual predicament, too subtle for mere representation, though referable to some genus of representable things which will define, in broad outline, its stage-setting.

The crude drama of action would lose little of its intelligibility by being transferred from the stage to the cinema-screen, or by being performed in a language unknown to the audience. But the psychological drama could not be so treated. Strip a Wagner opera of the music, a play of *Æschylus* of the poetry, and nothing remains. For the drama of the inner life is wrought with symbols about an internal principle, representation being a mere adjunct—often itself of a symbolic nature, as, for example, the storm in

*Rigoletto* which is simply the physical counterpart of the psychic relations of the characters. Symbolic drama aims at revealing the universal through the particular, as did the medieval mysteries. Its sphere is not limited to the phenomenal world, and its action, therefore, is not necessarily subject to the limitations of time and space. Thus it is no offence against dramatic propriety to extend a moment of realization to a detailed soliloquy, even though an anticipated action be thereby delayed. For such soliloquies do actually take place, but in a concentrated and not wholly conscious form: they are over in a moment and we act upon them apparently, though not actually, without reflection. For instance, at the emotional climax of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, where the melodramatist would require a brawl, Donizetti, knowing that the true climax lay in the moment of realization and not in the reactions it occasioned, has held up the "action" for the great sextet in which the situation is set forth in six different aspects as it affects the six different characters in the scene.

So action in opera must necessarily differ as much from action in drama as speech differs from song. It must become a symbolic language of itself, analogous to music and poetry, nearer perhaps to the rhythmic symbolism of the dance than to the representative gestures of realistic drama.

In the Greek drama there was practically no "action" in the sense in which we understand the term. In many places where action would seem, to modern notions of stagecraft, imperative, it is supplanted by a narrative speech. Now the musical factor bears the same relation to the operatic totality as the poetic factor bears to the symbolical drama, of Æschylus or of Shakespeare.

The "music" of Greek drama, about which we hear so much and know so little, was probably nearer to our ecclesiastical "intoning" than to our song or even to the style of recitative devised by Count Bardi's circle in supposed imitation of the Greeks. It seems unlikely that music served any purpose in the performances beyond that of giving additional emphasis to the poetic rhythms of the text.

At the present day, if we hear a poem recited in Persian, for example, the declamation sounds to western ears more like a kind of song than speech: but as a matter of fact it differs quite as much from Persian song as our conventional method of delivering blank verse differs from our usual conversational tones. Such music as there is in it is purely accessory—as it was, no doubt, in the performances of the Greek drama. But in opera music cannot be purely accessory, for it is the *raison d'être* of opera and almost the only common factor between operas of different schools and

periods. We admire such utterly diverse works as *Orfeo*, *Don Juan*, *Der Freischütz*, *Le Prophète*, *Tristan*, *Otello* and *Boris Godounov* under the generic title of opera : but we cannot derive from study of them an accurate and detailed definition of what opera is, still less of what it might be or ought to be.

The setting-to-music of a self-subsistent drama has never resulted in a work of art, for one is constantly reminded that it is a work of two arts unevenly balanced. And although the species of superimposed-music-drama includes such widely different examples as *Louise*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Moussorsky's *Marriage*, it is impossible to find in these or any other specimens of their kind the smallest indication of possible operatic developments. The music of such works, being little more than accessory to the drama, has no being of its own and conveys nothing when unaccompanied by action. On the other hand, we have the vast majority of operas in which music predominates over every other factor—from Handel to Wagner. "*Tristan and Isolde*" has been well described as "a symphonic-poem to which words have been added by hook or by crook." Now in every symphonic work a psychological drama is enacted. There is no difference between symphonic and operatic music, save that the underlying drama of the one is played entirely in the theatre of the listener's soul ; of the other, in part, by symbolical projection upon a visible stage : that is all. But it is quite as superfluous to add words by hook or by crook to music that is already self-sufficient as to superimpose music upon a finished drama.

Now if we eliminate these two kinds of "superimposed" music-drama, what remains to exemplify our ideal ? Gluck and Mozart are still the supreme masters of operatic art, but before either of them were born there existed a work which, in spite of all subsequent "reforms" and experiments, is yet as near an approximation to the perfect type of opera as anything that has followed it—Purcell's *Dido and Æneas*. Here we have no tone-poem to which words have been added by hook or by crook, nor yet a ready-made poetic drama set to music : a simple, tragic story is handled with a classic restraint which invest it with a classic poignancy. This work is the very embodiment of the spirit voiced in Virgil's "*Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.*" There is so little theatrical realism in it that we seem to be dealing directly with the pure spiritual and passionate forces of humanity rather than with individuals ruled by them. Here if anywhere in opera we can find the true spirit of Greek drama resuscitated : and the use of the chorus as a dark background of commentary upon the machinations of destiny reminds us at once of the Greek tradition and of the Japanese No-drama.

Purcell's opera is more than two centuries old, but the interim development of the operatic form has not been in any sense an advance, and opera has still to determine its true direction. There are signs, on the one hand, that the traditions associated with the word "grand" will favour the production of increasingly spectacular and pantomimic works for the musical stage. On the other hand, there is the far more hopeful prospect of the development of a form of "chamber-opera" in which the most intimate and subtle subjects may be dealt with in appropriate surroundings.

"Grand" opera and the conditions attendant upon its production are incompatible with any high degree of psychological subtlety. Moreover the complex and multifarious nature of the paraphernalia required for "grand" productions involves a decentralization of control which is fatal to the unity of the performance. In chamber-opera the first principle is suggestion in place of statement, for it will be concerned with matters that can be hinted at by symbols but never fully revealed save in the mind of the spectator. External artifice will only be employed for the purpose of lighting up that interior theatre of the soul wherein the real drama will be enacted for each individual alone.

A small curtained stage on which variety and subtlety of lighting will for the most part take the place of scenery, a small cast and chorus, and an orchestra of four to four and twenty players—these are the modest requirements of chamber-opera. But its most conspicuous advantage lies in the possibility of central control of the whole production by one man—possibly the composer himself—who must be versed in the symbolology not of music alone but of gesture and light and colour also. Every movement and expression, every gradation of light as well as every note of the music must be under his direct control: for thus, and thus only, shall we obtain a whole and unitary work of art in that form which has hitherto given us little but confused tautologies.

PHILIP HESELTINE.



## THE STARS AND THE CRITICS

### ALSO SOME GENERAL REFLECTIONS

A WELL known critic propounded some months ago a very interesting problem. He asked whether the musical critics in England to-day had as much influence on public opinion or carried as much weight as their predecessors, meaning, of course, Davison of *The Times*, Henry Chorley of the *Athenæum* and, in later years, Joseph Bennett of the *Daily Telegraph*. It was no question of relative ability, simply one of effect in guiding public taste. As an outsider, with no technical knowledge but an omnivorous appetite for musical criticism, I read the article with keen interest, but to my mind, so far at least as London is concerned, anything like a close comparison could hardly be made, for the reason that the conditions so obviously favoured the critics of the past. They stood out by themselves, or at least Davison and Chorley did, with no one powerful enough to dispute their verdicts. Bennett was not so fortunate, but had the advantage over his rivals of appealing to the largest public. To-day the London critic, no matter how great his knowledge, is only one voice among many. Chorley was in a specially favoured position. He wrote week after week for years for the same body of readers, many people, it is a well known fact, taking the *Athenæum* solely for the purpose of finding out what he thought of opera or symphony, prima donna or pianist. This being the case there can be little doubt that, within a limited circle, he had more direct influence in forming the tastes of opera and concert goers than any other English critic. It is nothing to the point that he led his followers aright in some directions, hopelessly astray in others.

If some of our modern critics feel disappointed at the result of their work a partial explanation can perhaps be found in the fact that in one particular—their attitude towards the world's favourite singers—they are completely at variance with the public. From what one reads only too often it might be imagined that it was an easy thing to become a prima donna or a leading tenor, so contemptuous are the references to those spoiled children of fortune. Of



course, when an individual performance has to be dealt with, justice is nearly always done to the artist, but when writing in the general sense many critics make no attempt to disguise their scorn of the star singers. It is a quaint fact that only in relation to singing is this dislike of the best to be found. The critic who has quoted with gusto von Bulow's bitter jibe about the tenor being not a man but a disease will very likely on the following day become lyrical about a Russian dancer—equally a star but in a different sphere of labour. In all this, as it seems to me, there is a good deal of unfairness. The singers' personal weaknesses are allowed to outweigh their natural endowment and their trained skill. That singers with the world at their feet should think rather highly of themselves is only natural. Who among us could live all our days in an incense-laden atmosphere and not be affected by it? And what after all are the harmless vanities of soprano or tenor compared with the colossal egoism of the popular politician—prepared to build a new heaven and a new earth at the shortest notice and on the shakiest foundations!

One critic, whom I read with religious regularity, seldom mentions a star soprano or tenor without a jest more or less good-humoured, but at the same time I have known him avow his limitless admiration for George Robey. Now in his own line George Robey is a star of stars. He draws, according to common report, a huge salary, the bids for his services growing higher and higher, and he provides so much of his own material that he is almost independent of authors. All that matters in the dialogue is his own invention, and one of his chief attractions is a delightful uncertainty as to what he will say next. In one all-important respect he stands on exactly the same footing as the prima donna. He earns a lot of money because he fills the house.

Of all the star singers who made history in the nineteenth century it would be difficult, on contemporary evidence, to name one whose fame was not fully deserved. Pasta was so great a tragic actress and had such vocal style that even when her intonation began to fail she compelled admiration. Sontag had sufficient charm of personality to interest Beethoven, and she must have been a musician as well as a vocalist, for she was the first to sing the soprano parts in the Choral Symphony and the Mass in D. She created Euryanthe and was by general consent the best Mozart singer of her day. More than this, she did not know what it was to get out of tune. As she had in addition to all her other gifts beauty of face and figure, the public could not be blamed for making much of her. To one point in her career there is no parallel. After a retirement of twenty years she returned to the stage with powers

unimpaired. Malibran—dead at twenty-eight—left an immortal name. The stage, the orchestra and the drawing room were all one to her. She triumphed everywhere. Such was her magic that long years after she had passed from the scene the mention of her name would bring tears to the eyes of the English tenor who had sung with her. She once told him she would kill him if he did not show more concern about her stage distress. The poor man lost his head, kissed her in real earnest at rehearsal, and was very properly reproved for his audacity.

The devices used to make a star were never carried to such extremes as in the case of Jenny Lind. Even her private virtues were shamelessly turned by her agents to purposes of advertisement. Excessive *réclame* preceded her *début* in England and was never relaxed till after her concert tour in America. Still she was a thorough artist who slaved to give the public of her very best. Sims Reeves, who thought her the greatest singer he ever heard, said he once knew of her practising all the morning so as to be articulate on a high B flat! Perhaps the only prima donna who was ever at heart a Puritan she was from all accounts as great in oratorio as in her few parts on the stage. She led the *Sanctus* in *Elijah* as one inspired and sang "I know that my Redeemer liveth" with a simple fervour that no one since her time has approached. On this point the expert evidence is overwhelming. To her the song was just a declaration of faith. The people who suffered every possible inconvenience in crowding to hear her always had their reward while her voice remained in its prime. Madame Grisi did not, like Jenny Lind, make a sensational success but from her first appearance in London in 1834 she was a fixed star for over five and twenty years, singing everything and never failing except when she attempted Pauline Viardot's part of the Mother in *The Prophet* which was not written for a soprano. A limited musician as regards her power of reading she studied so thoroughly and had such a wonderful memory that it was said of her when once she knew a part she knew it for ever. She was the one Norma after Pasta and though her true *métier* was lyric tragedy she had her triumphs in moods of gaiety. Her one blunder was an ill-advised reappearance five years after her formal retirement. She misjudged her powers and the result was disaster. The same thing happened in later years to Etelka Gerster—a much younger woman—who fondly imagined that her lost voice had returned. One sad night at Covent Garden destroyed the illusion.

On the merits of Patti and Christine Nilsson—one recently dead and the other still surviving—there is surely no need to insist. Unless in their different ways they had been very great they could

not have held their unquestioned positions for they had formidable rivals. Patti for a generation set the standard of pure singing. No one had more brilliant execution; no one a more perfect *legato*. She could charm as much with the simplest song in the concert room as in her best parts at the opera. Even Lilli Lehmann, a very stern critic, found no fault in her. No doubt she was carefully guided and looked after in her girlhood but she owed far more to nature than to any singing master. The difficulties that ordinary singers have to overcome never seem to have troubled her and at eighteen she conquered the world. Great powers have never been preserved over such a length of time. Even when she was, for a soprano, quite old, Bernard Shaw said she sang Elizabeth's Prayer better than he had ever heard anyone else sing it. She never sang a note of Wagner on the stage but if *The Meistersingers* had been done in Italian in her day she might have been an incomparable Eva. The idea is not so far-fetched as might appear. When Felix Weingartner heard *The Meistersingers* in Italian at Covent Garden during Harris's reign he forgave the translation, and even the cuts, because the chief parts were so beautifully sung.

I am told that no one heard the very best of Christine Nilsson who did not hear her during her first four seasons in London—1867 to 1870. After her first visit to America she had not quite the same freshness of voice and her style had lost something of its purity. Old opera goers who can recall her Margaret, her Ophelia and her Mignon in those early days look heavenward when they speak of her. Of her powers away from the theatre less is said, but I know that once after the rehearsal for a Henry Leslie concert she sang some Swedish songs, to her own accompaniment, so enchantingly that all the male members of the choir became her slaves for life. These brilliant singers could do everything. Ilma de Murska won her fame as the Queen of Night in the *Magic Flute* and in other parts that depended mainly on dazzling execution, but when it fell to her lot to play Senta in the first performance of a Wagner opera ever given in England she was more than equal to the task. Santley, who sang the Dutchman, says she was admirable. In the same way in later years when a soprano was wanted for Paderewski's opera in New York, Madame Sembrich—another singer pre-eminent in the florid school—stepped lightly into the breach. To the real vocalist nothing is impossible. The modern critic may speak scornfully of a shower of roulades but the singer who can throw them off without apparent effort, keep in perfect tune and never produce an unpleasant sound, must have a thoroughly placed voice and that is, technically, the essence of the business. Madame Albani was trained by Lamperti on the music of *Sonnambula* and other old

world operas but when, three years after she came to London, she sang in *Lohengrin* von Bulow pronounced her the ideal Elsa. In this way one might go on at indefinite length and always come to the same conclusion. The common sense of the matter is that singers become stars because they have the finest voices and have learnt to make the best use of them. To blame the public for worshipping at these shrines is hopelessly illogical. They simply satisfy a natural craving for the best. One point is often forgotten. Like the great pianists and violinists the big singers give the fullest return for the money paid to hear them. Every appearance is an event and everything is made subservient to the task in hand. Some singers when they have a big part to play at night deny themselves, as far as possible, the pleasure of ordinary conversation during the whole day. I love that story of Jean de Reszke, in his days of power at Covent Garden, strolling down to the theatre two hours before the curtain rose so that he might have ample time to dress and make up and so be able, free from all disturbing influences, to give the public the finest work of which he was capable.

As the stars of the singing world are often said to have an influence wholly evil it is not out of place here to recall the fact that to Jean de Reszke we owe beyond all question the new birth of opera in London. Italian Opera was never at a lower ebb in this country than when in 1887 Augustus Harris made his first musical venture at Drury Lane. The Season resulted in a loss of ten thousand pounds, but there was compensation. A tenor had been found worthy to succeed Mario. One night in London did more for de Reszke than three years in Paris had done. On the strength of his prize Harris secured Covent Garden—tottering to its fall—for 1888, and thenceforth all was plain sailing. It is an old story that de Reszke sang here as a baritone in 1874 and 1875. I recall with some pride that—being a boy at the time—I heard him sing Valentine in *Faust* and left the theatre thinking what a beautiful tenor voice he had. Just as opera goes, though many of them may not know it, owe a deep debt of gratitude to de Reszke, so Puccini may thank two singers for his popularity in England. When the Carl Rosa Company produced *La Bohème* at Manchester in 1897—little more than a year after the first performance in Italy—the financial result was so discouraging that they could not afford to keep the work in their repertory. The day of success did not come till Madame Melba and Caruso took up the chief parts at Covent Garden. The fascination of two exceptional voices did so much for Puccini that *Madame Butterfly* at Covent Garden was a monetary success from the first night. These little things are worth remembering when the star singers are whistled down the wind as of no account.

Perhaps one cause of the wide divergence between the critics and the public is that the critics—or at any rate a good many of them—will persist in treating florid singing as mere empty ornament. Of course in the old world music it is a great deal more than that, being indeed the medium through which all sorts of emotions have to be expressed. Bearing that fact in mind one can appreciate the dictum of Lilli Lehmann that it is ten times harder to sing Norma than to sing Leonora in *Fidelio*. She speaks with authority, as she triumphed in both parts. In these days the baritone or bass who sings Elijah seems to regard "Is not His word" as more or less a piece of task work. Santley used to make the florid passages express, as they were meant to, the might of Jehovah's power.

From what one reads sometimes it might be supposed that, at any rate as regards English singers, the art of distinct enunciation was discovered the day before yesterday. Nothing could be further from the truth. Does anyone suppose that Braham, whose declamation was described by all contemporary critics as unsurpassable, held his sway over big audiences without letting his words be clearly heard? The notion is unthinkable. In the case of Sims Reeves we have the testimony of Sir Frederick Cowen who in his book of recollections has expressed the opinion that Reeves' enunciation—every word carrying to the furthest limits of the largest hall—was more remarkable than his voice. And so one might go on,—mentioning nearly every native singer of real quality during the last sixty years or more. Madame Sainton Dolby, Edith Wynne and Mrs. Patey and among retired singers still living Santley, Edward Lloyd and Mary Davies, had nothing to learn in the art of singing English words. Who could tell the story of a song better than Santley?—and he was equally at home in every style.

The truth is that the old singers regarded distinct enunciation as an indispensable part of a good vocalist's equipment but not as the beginning and the end of singing. They thought very rightly that truth of intonation and consistent beauty of tone were just as important. To quote one other case, I have never heard English words more clearly sung on the stage than by Georgina Burns when she was at her best in the Carl Rosa Company.

SYDNEY H. PARDON.



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## THE HEYFORD CONCERTS

*"For a number of years before the war classical concerts were organised at Lower Heyford and the neighbouring village of Steeple Aston, in Oxfordshire. The concerts were given by musical amateurs from Oxford, and the work was an unqualified success. It proved beyond question that first-class music is appreciated by ordinary village people, and that by steadily continuing concerts through a number of seasons the standard of taste and power of appreciation can be raised to an enormous extent. The principle adopted in this instance was to include only really first-class music in the programme and to banish all consideration of what is supposed to be popular taste, and as a result it was discovered that the music of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms can be enjoyed by village people."—Final Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction.*

It has long been a favourite thesis of mine that the progress of popular aesthetic education in England was retarded by the accident that the pioneer advocates of 'art for the masses'—John Ruskin and William Morris—happened to be 'artists' and not musicians. Because of that fact educational effort was given chiefly to arts for which the modern Englishman has far less bent by nature than he has for music. Municipalities gave their energies to the establishment of innumerable picture galleries, but a municipal orchestra was never regarded as part of the necessary equipment of a self-respecting town. Schools of 'Art,' in the restricted sense of that word, sprang up in all directions, but musical education was to a great extent neglected. The least promising veins of popular talent were the first to be worked; and inevitably the result was a little disappointing. It is only during the musical renaissance of the last twenty years that the full possibilities of popular education in art have been revealed, and even now timidity and lack of faith often prevent people from aiming at the best which is attainable, by causing them to doubt whether anything so good can in fact be attained. The experiments which have proved beyond question the responsiveness of English working people to good music are not so widely known as they deserve to be; and it has been suggested to me that it might do good if the history of the particular musical venture to which the Adult Education Com-

mittee has referred in the passage quoted above were made known to the readers of *Music and Letters*.

Lower Heyford and Steeple Aston are small neighbouring villages about twelve miles from Oxford, and the Heyford Concerts were started in the national schoolroom at Lower Heyford in the year 1906 by Mr. F. V. Schuster who was then an undergraduate at New College, Oxford. Six concerts were given in the first season and six again in the second. In the autumn of 1908 the enterprise was transferred to Steeple Aston where the Technical Schoolroom makes a larger and much better concert hall than any building in Lower Heyford, and this schoolroom was used for the concerts until the war compelled their discontinuance and has been used again for the 'reconstructed' series of concerts which began last autumn. Altogether there have been sixty-two concerts, of which fifty-seven were given between 1906 and March 3rd, 1915—the date of the last concert before the interval. In addition to the concerts four organ recitals have taken place—while in December, 1914, there was a performance of Advent and Christmas music in Lower Heyford church.

The performers at the Heyford Concerts have mostly been undergraduates or residents in Oxford, but several old Oxford men have kept up their connection with the enterprise, and very generous help has been given by professional musicians. The Jubilee of the concerts was celebrated on November 1st, 1913, when Dr. H. P. Allen brought a small string orchestra from Oxford; and Dr. Allen also gave one of the organ recitals at Rousham, a neighbouring village, where the organ, though small, is very good. Dr. Henry Ley has played at no fewer than thirteen concerts and gave three of the organ recitals. A feature of the performance at Lower Heyford church in December, 1914, was the horn-playing of Professor Théophile Mahy of Brussels, who was then a refugee living in Oxford. But the bulk of the performers have been undergraduates or dons or other amateurs resident in Oxford. Two of the most devoted helpers of the movement in the past were Mr. Leslie Hunter and Mr. Arthur Heath, both of them Fellows of New College, who were killed in France, the one in 1915, the other some ten months later. The loss of these two musicians has made the reconstruction of the concerts immeasurably more difficult than it would otherwise have been.

During the first two seasons at Lower Heyford the programmes erred perhaps in being a little too long—though it is true the audience always showed themselves ready for more—but since then the length of the performances has been from an hour and a half to an hour and three quarters. All the more ordinary forms

of chamber music have been represented—piano solos, sonatas for violin and for violoncello, pianoforte trios and quartets, string quartets and quintets. Only occasionally have programmes without a singer been arranged. Sometimes the programmes have been chosen with a definite illustrative purpose and have been representative of English, French or German music, as the case might be, and one of the early concerts at Heyford consisted entirely of works by Mozart and followed a short lecture on that composer which was given by Mr. F. V. Schuster. As a general rule, however, there has been a good deal of variety. Any type of really good music has been admitted and the concerts have by no means been confined to 'classical' music, in the more restricted and pedantic sense of that word. At the risk of being offensively statistical I will venture to give some particulars. Perhaps the best rough indication of the extent of ground covered will be a list of the composers whose works have been performed. The total number of performances, including those in church, is sixty-seven; and the following list shows the composers most frequently represented in the programmes and the number of concerts or recitals at which music by each of them has been played or sung:—J. S. Bach (42), Beethoven (40), Brahms (38), Mozart (36), Schubert (31), Handel (25), Schumann (22), Henry Purcell (16), Mendelssohn (15), Haydn (13), Parry (8), Chopin (7), Stanford (6), John Blow, John Dowland and George Butterworth (5 each), T. Morley, Carissimi, Edward Purcell and Debussy (4 each). Music by each of the following has been performed at three concerts:—Orlando di Lasso, Martini, A. L. Couperin, A. Scarlatti, Arne, J. Attey, Dvorak, Max Reger, and Vaughan Williams. Two appearances each have been made by Marcello, Veracini, Giles Earle, W. Boyce, T. Hume, S. Storace, R. Leveridge, S. S. Wesley, Pearsall, Gluck, Rubinstein, Guilmant, Henschel, Tovey, Hadow, John Ireland, Percy Grainger, Ernest Walker, Roger Quilter, Hurlstone, W. A. Pickard-Cambridge and O. H. Gotch; and music by each of the following has been performed at one concert or recital:—Buxtehude, Salvator Rosa, Festa, Lulli, Stradella, Buononcini, Caldara, D. Scarlatti, Mazzinghi, Marin Marais, Milandre, Rameau, F. Couperin, John Bull, W. Byrde, John Eccles, T. Brown, M. Este, Pelham Humphries, T. Ford, Rosseter, Croft, W. Shield, R. Jones, A. Young, C. Wesley, Stevens, Mattheson, John Lenton, W. Wallace, Rheinberger, Herzogenberg, Joachim, Bargiel, Curschmann, Strauss, Kreisler, A. Hollander, Corkine, Grieg, Franck, Saint Saëns, G. Fauré, Ravel, B. L. P. Godard, Tchaikovsky, Moskovsky, Scriabin, Arensky, Palmgren, Sullivan, G. Munro, Harwood, A. Somervell, Charles Wood, E. German, F. Keel, W. A. Aikin, Graham Peel and Balfour

Gardiner. Thus the Heyford Concerts have provided specimens of the work of one hundred and eleven composers. But folk music has also occupied a large space in the programmes, folk songs having been performed on forty-one occasions. Some pieces have been repeated several times at different concerts, for it was felt that with good music familiarity breeds understanding. Brahms's Violin Sonata in A major, for example, has been performed six times, and that in G major five times. There have been four performances of Beethoven's Violincello sonata in A major (Op. 69) and three performances each of his Violin Sonata in A major (Op. 30, No. 1), of the Bach Concerto for two Violins in D minor, of Schubert's Trio in B flat (Op. 99), of Mendelssohn's Variations Concertantes for Violoncello and Piano, of Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata, of Mozart's Pianoforte Quartet in G minor and of his two-movement Violin Sonata in E flat (No. 5). Certain songs have also been repeated.

The programme of a recent concert may perhaps be quoted in its entirety as a specimen: it was the sixtieth of the whole series and was given on December 4th last, the singer being Mrs. Sanderson, the violinist the Rev. E. H. Fellowes, and the pianist the Rev. J. F. Shaw :—

1. SONGS :—

- (i). Long since in Egypt's plenteous land (*from Judith*) *Parry*
- (ii). My heart ever faithful *Bach*

2. SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO IN G MAJOR, Op. 78 *Brahms*

3. ENGLISH FOLK SONGS :—

- (i). A Farmer's Son so Sweet (Somerset).
- (ii). Oh, Waly, Waly (Somerset).
- (iii). A Bold Young Farmer (Essex).
- (iv). The Lover's Tasks (Somerset).

4. PIANO SOLOS :—

- (i). Nocturne in G major *Chopin*
- (ii). Rhapsody in E flat *Brahms*

5. SONGS FROM "A SHROPSHIRE LAD" *George Butterworth*

- (i). Loveliest of Trees
- (ii). When the Lad for longing sighs
- (iii). The Lads in their hundreds

6. DUO FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO IN A MINOR, Op. 162 *Schubert*

7. IRISH AND MANX FOLK SONGS :—

- (i). Mylecharane (Manx)
  - (ii). The Beautiful City of Sligo
  - (iii). The Lover's Curse
  - (iv). I Know where I'm goin'
  - (v). Trottin' to the Fair
- } (Irish)

Since the concerts were transferred to Steeple Aston records of the size of the audience have been kept, so far as this can be esti-



mated from the receipts at the door and the numbers of programmes distributed. The figures in the following table should be considered in relation to the fact that the total population of Steeple Aston parish in 1911 was 615, of whom sixty-four lived in a hamlet about a mile away.

Season.	Number of Concerts.	Average Attendance.	Minimum Attendance.	Maximum Attendance.
1908—1909	9	No record kept.	100	190
1909—1910	7	"	100	220
1910—1911	8	98	80	160
1911—1912	8	108	75	150
1912—1913	5	130	80	160
1913—1914	6	148	85	300*
1914—1915	2	90	90	90
1919—1920†	5	107	72	185

The three first organ recitals were given on Sunday afternoons and the little church of Rousham was packed to the doors on each occasion. The somewhat larger church at Lower Heyford was also filled to overflowing for the performance of Advent and Christmas music which took place on a week-day evening in December, 1914. At the organ recital at Steeple Aston on January 30th, 1919, on the other hand, the audience was thin; but this was due to bad weather and to the fact that the roads were covered with ice. At the performance in Lower Heyford church there was a small chorus of fifteen voices and an orchestra consisting of two first violins, two second violins, two violas, violoncello, double bass, horn, glockenspiel, and organ, while the Heyford ringers assisted with hand-bells in Pearsall's "In Dulci Jubilo."

At the performances in church admission was of course free, but collections were taken to cover expenses. One penny was charged for admission to the concerts until 1919 but in the season 1919—1920 increasing costs made it necessary to raise the fee for admission first to two-pence and afterwards to three-pence. Programmes have always been distributed free of charge. The admission fees have naturally not been sufficient to cover expenses, even though expenditure has been\* kept down to a minimum through the kindness of the Governors of the Technical School in charging only a nominal fee for the use of the hall and through the generous help given by farmers, cab-proprietors and others in the neighbourhood by lending conveyances. Subscriptions have provided the balance of the funds. That financial difficulties need not deter anyone from similar enterprises is shown by the fact that the average cost

\* Jubilee Concert (orchestral).

† The charge for admission was higher in 1919—1920 than in previous years.



of the forty-three concerts which were given between 1908 and 1914 was only £2 10s. 6d. per concert. Even last winter, with railway fares and printing expenses increased and with more to be paid for the hire of a piano, the cost per concert was only about £4 6s. 0d. So much can be done by carefulness, and by voluntary help in the way of transport, to keep expenses down.

The degree to which the Heyford Concerts have been appreciated and their effect upon the taste of the audience are things which obviously cannot be measured. But no one who has seen the steadily maintained attendance and the numbers of working people who come regularly, in some cases from neighbouring villages, to concert after concert, can fail to be encouraged. The lads who sit at the back of the room and rustle their programmes and generally make themselves rather a nuisance are to be seen a couple of years later sitting with their sweethearts in the body of the hall and listening attentively. At first, of course, good music came to most of the audience as something new and rather strange. It was puzzling, though delightful—unless the pieces were very long. The general attitude of surprise is illustrated by the remark made by a farmer after one of the earlier concerts in reference to the Waldstein sonata: "Why that piano piece alone was worth a penny and more." On the whole I think it is the 'better class' of wage-earners who have appreciated the concerts most. Carpenters, gardeners and small holders have been more assiduous in attendance than either the large farmers or the agricultural labourers. As regards the kind of music which the audience has relished most, it goes without saying that folk songs have proved especially attractive. A vocal quartet is always popular and the violoncello—or the 'big fiddle' as it is sometimes called—is a favourite instrument. I should say that Schubert and Bach more often really 'get' the audience than any other composers: Mozart has 'taken on' less well in comparison with others than I think one would expect. A preference is shown for music with a very marked rhythm: for example, I noticed at a recent concert that some dances by Marin Marais for viola and piano roused unusual enthusiasm. Mendelssohn's 'Variations Concertantes' for 'cello and piano, which has been performed several times, was obviously very much liked. It is true one more often hears praise of particular performers than of particular pieces of music; but after all that is so with most audiences.

The question naturally arises whether enterprises similar to the Heyford Concerts could be carried out in other parts of the country. No doubt the near neighbourhood of Oxford and the Oxford University Musical Club and Union has enormously facilitated

things. But though Oxforas are not plentiful, there are other towns which count good amateur musicians among their residents and if such amateurs, instead of playing chamber music in each others' houses, would only select some village in the neighbourhood and play there instead, they would perhaps increase their own enjoyment and would certainly give great enjoyment to the village people. In some districts I have no doubt much more might be achieved than has been achieved in the district of which I am writing, for if Oxford is unusually rich in music, Oxfordshire is very far indeed from being a specially musical county, and the villages are so small that local enterprise in the way of choral societies or village orchestras is almost impossible. At all events the lesson of the Heyford enterprise, so far as it goes, is clear enough. It has shown that if you give English village people good music, they will like it, and like it more and more as time goes on.

REGINALD LENNARD.

## PARRY MEMORIAL FUND

Sir Henry Hadow and the Committee of the Fund ask for the publication of this statement :—

The appeal issued through a letter to the Press early in the year for a permanent Memorial to Sir Hubert Parry to be placed in Gloucester Cathedral has met with wide response.

The Prince of Wales before leaving England expressed his wish to be associated with it and sent a donation. The list of subscribers includes the names of many prominent musicians and amateurs of music, business houses, and musical societies. Among these last are Messrs. Novello and Co., the Proprietors of *Musical Opinion*, the Bristol Madrigal Society, the Bristol Musical Club, the Gloucester Orpheus Society. It is felt, however, that there must be many other individuals and societies, particularly choral societies, who would wish to take part in a National Memorial to the man whose art has enriched their musical resources to an incalculable extent. The fund is being kept open for a time in order to give fuller opportunity for this, and to allow of the response of music-lovers abroad and in the overseas Dominions.

The Dean of Gloucester has expressed the wish that the Memorial in the Cathedral should be simple. The Committee of the Parry Memorial Fund is in complete accord with his wish, and is only desirous that it should be as representative as possible of the many-sided interests which engaged Sir Hubert Parry's sympathies throughout his life. With this in view, donations, even of the smallest amount, will be welcomed. They should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer:

THE HON. NORAH DAWNAY, 29, Oxford Square, London, W. 2.

## CLICHÉS

I RECENTLY played the Serenade in Algernon Ashton's Op. 108, which is a piece of music written in the pleasant style of the German conservatory professors of the last century. The style is a blending of mild "romance" with neat contrapuntal movement, and is therefore characterless. But though characterless, it is still consistent, retaining its own vocabulary. I was consequently surprised to meet in bars 28-29 of the Serenade a regular Handelian cadence,—



This started me upon a train of thought. The cadence was disturbing. It presented something that was foreign to the thought and feeling of the music. It affected me like a miscalculated quotation in an essay or a trite phrase in a poem, completely destroying the quiet pleasure the music had been giving me. Why had so simple a thing done all this? In the end I determined that the cadence represented a sort of musical cliché; and as my train of thought led me to conclusions which I had at other times reached from other starting points, I became grateful to Mr. Ashton for his momentary failure to keep to the letter of his thought.

The cliché in literature is a word or phrase of stereotyped use and exact and rigid significance. It is an expression that has no fluidity. It is as a dry rut into which slips the pen of the writer in careless or uninspired moments,—a piece of common property, the same to all men and at all times. It is therefore literally "abstract," foreign to art of any description, and the cause of intellectual death, either in the phrase itself or to the matter with which it is brought into contact. For the thought and feeling that pass into

art are essentially living things, demanding for their true expression terms of "concrete" nature, fresh individuality, and novel significance. The substance of art is a plastic material that must be moulded by the living fingers of the artist. If his fingers cease to work, the moulding continues, but as if effected by a die that is as rigid and unchanging as the stamp that marks a million pennies.

The phrase that is eventually to harden into fixity at the worst or descend to platitude at the best, is probably in the beginning a very happy invention. It may have been the "spell-word" of genius, the one and only means of creating in us the image living in the mind of the artist, as in Shakespeare's

I had else been perfect . . .  
As broad and general as the casing air :  
But now I am *cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd*, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears.

Whatever it may have been in the beginning, it is quoted (for the cliché seems always to begin in quotation) until at the thousandth remove it has lost all allusive power and passed into a pointless, mechanical piece of abstraction,—generally, by-the-bye, in an erroneous form, this particular example appearing mostly as "cribbed, cabined, and confined." Emerson says in his essay "Quotation and Originality" that "next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it." This is true enough; but when the sentence begins to rattle in literature like a loose bone in a skull I think the man next to the first quoter is the man who first ceases to use it.

The literary cliché is dishonest; it is pretentious, representing no more than lip-homage; it is a sort of cant-phraseology; and it weakens its great original source. It is seldom used by men who, writing thoughtfully and with care, have lived the life they write about or have learnt to understand art.

Quotation in music (a subject which has not as yet been adequately discussed by the critics) easily descends into platitude. Indeed, the greater number of instances of musical quotation that have been observed by recent writers are of the type of cliché spoken of above. Properly managed, and effected under pressure of true feeling, the device is enormously effective, as when Casella, in his beautiful "In Alsazia: croci di legno . . ." alludes to the French national anthem. Otherwise it is not effective. The "Fate knocking at the door" motive, which has been used this past few years by a score of composers (*e.g.*, by Dr. Ethel Smyth for humour in "The Boatswain's Mate" and by Rachmaninov for tragedy in his song "Fate" (Op. 21, No. 1) is as disturbing as Mr. Ashton's

Handelian cadence. Such a familiar theme narrows the significance of the moment. In free-and-easy music a popular song may be quoted with effect, as "We won't go home till morning" is quoted by Parry in his "Pied Piper" and as a theme from "You're here and I'm here" is quoted by Eugene Goossens in his string quartet in C major. Are such devices, however, really funny? Have they the lightsome gambolling of Shakespeare's play upon the meaning of words, or the dismal obviousness of Tom Hood's pun? I think the latter. But musical quotation is too large a matter to be discussed here, where it is in place only because the practice—advocated to-day by many critics—may lead to a musical equivalent of the literary cliché.

Not only are words and phrases dried up into platitude, but also ideas, thoughts, artistic moods, figures and illustrations, and even subjects. In poetry, the minor Elizabethan craftsmen, those who provided texts for the madrigalists, rarely broke away from stock poetic "conceits," especially when their subjects were drawn from classic mythology. The nineteenth century poets were ridden by two pests, one the *like so-and-so* phrase of comparison (which overmastered poets who write, as Shelley does, out of immediate sensation instead of matured thought), another the end-word with few rhyming companions. Whenever in a nineteenth century lyric I see at the end of a line *emotion* or *ocean* or *devotion* I am always inclined to jump the stanza, knowing well that even so thoughtful a poet as, let us say, Matthew Arnold, can have nothing fresh to discover under such circumstances. Often the literary platitude is false at root. The every day phrases "old Papa Haydn," "old Bach," "old Pepys," "quaint old Sir Thomas Browne," and the like, are as false as would be the impossible phrases "old Shakespeare," "old Schubert," and "old Mozart"; because *old* Haydn wrote only a small part of his music, Bach produced his most characteristic and vital music long before he reached the age at which Shakespeare retired, Pepys ended his diary at the age at which Mozart died, and Thomas Browne wrote the "Religio Medici" when he was at the most twenty-nine. These phrases are invented in ignorance and used in indolence. Yet they remain in our literature and journalism,\* their equivalents form the foundation of our teaching of musical theory, and few musical critics seem able to avoid them.

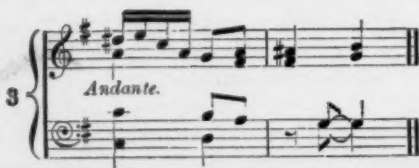
\* The "veteran" cliché which writers attach to long-lived composers is very active at present: in *The Musical Mail* for March, 1920, Mr. H. Wild, in writing about the early problems of equal temperament, tells us that "at last old Father Bach came to the conclusion that the only way out was by compromise . . . The 'Welltempered Clavier' was written to demonstrate (etc.)." Bach was born in 1685. The first book of the "48" belongs to 1722. Its chronological position among Bach's work is the same as that of the "Christmas pieces" among Mendelssohn's.



As each generation has its own literary expressions, so it has its own set musical terms. These are figures, melodic turns, harmonic progressions, forms, and ideas, also modes of thought, all of which are used by contemporary composers, be they Bachs or Matthesons, Beethovens or Steibelts. But only as used by the minor composers do they become pointless and abstract, and only where they have the nature of the cliché does the music containing them obviously "date." The beautiful cadence—



still lives in freshness in the greater Handel. In Pepusch (*i.e.* Ex. 2) it withered even as the composer wrote. The familiar cadence of Mozart—



is as vital to-day as the thought it expresses; but it sounds like a bit of faded slang when used by that once popular "musician to the Queen," Karl Frederick Abel.

The most vicious cliché in the middle of the nineteenth century was the chord of the diminished seventh, particularly as a modulatory step. Verdi warned young composers against this as against the devil. Since the beginning of the present century, when music has been trying to find fresh means of expression, we have had many curious specimens, the average length of life of each being about the same as that of current catch words. One of these was the harmonic movement constructed of strict diatonic chords *plus* a foreign note (usually the note next below the root) in faithful if unimaginative attendance,—

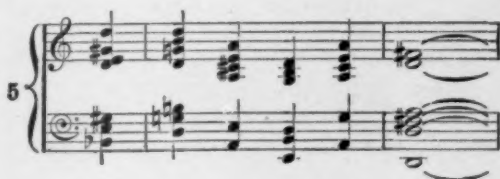


This seems to have died about the year 1910. The whole-tone scale, which arose with Debussy, soon became stereotyped; it does not predominate now as it did ten years ago. In its place has risen a convention of which the formula seems to be:—Take two simple lines of melody, harmonise these independently of each other, combine the results, and let them proceed together whatever the clash. This may make interesting music, particularly when aided by the individuality of orchestral instruments, yet it is imitable, sounding the same in all places and under all conditions. It is manneristic; and wherever (be it in the eighteenth century or the twentieth) we are conscious of “manner,” we know that the composer has failed to exercise that “ulterior intellectual perception which gives (to abstract signs and symbols) a power that makes their old use forgotten, and puts eyes and a tongue into every dumb and inanimate object,” as Emerson says in his essay on poets.

It is obvious that “pure music” must tend to become stereotyped in form; yet when an architectural feature is a necessity, and when the composition has life, the feature, though stereotyped, does not become platitude. There are no clichés in the fugue expositions of Bach; after the entry of the second voice all is original. And though Bach constantly uses the same cadences, never do these become platitudinous.

Fifty years ago the four-movement symphony began to be unsuited for the expression of modern thoughts. Composers thereupon began to telescope movements, sometimes placing the scherzo in the middle of the adagio. This process of contraction produced the one-movement form of the tone-poem. Its most recent manifestation is in the new cello sonata of Delius, the form of which is:—(a) exposition, (b) development, (c) slow movement, and (d) recapitulation.

Delius concludes this sonata with a cadence that is as typical of the middle nineteenth century as Mr. Ashton's is of the early eighteenth,—



But he has not similarly fallen into cliché, and this despite the fact that of late years the Authentic Cadence has been more or less discarded.

To explain the why and the wherefore of the emotional and constructive life in Delius' cadence would call for a disquisition on the nature of music and the character of the modern musical mind. I can no more than hint at an explanation.—The full close of *dominant-tonic* epitomises the great idea of "key" as the basis of musical form. The idea prevailed from about 1600 to about 1900; and wherever it was carried into living effect the Authentic Cadence, being the only thing possible or desirable, could not be other than itself constantly alive and of ceaseless, universal power. The Plagal Cadence (*subdominant-tonic*), on the other hand, having less key character, acquired manner: it became self-conscious, and became by association typical of church music—so much so that even when modified by German composers of the Rheinberger class



it still drew attention to itself. But when a generation ago the idea of key as the basis of form ceased to control music, the Authentic Cadence ceased to epitomise key and so fell into disuse, giving way to the more appropriate cadences of which the following (from the Delius cello sonata)



is an example representing a full close in A major. But these modern cadences are often self conscious. They are ridden to death,—which explains why so much music, from Debussy onwards, has died at its birth; yet when a composer arises whose sense of key is absolute, the Authentic Cadence regains power and proves itself as inevitable as the daily setting of the sun. The artistic sense, however, has definitely changed this past twenty or thirty years; and though a piece of music may end with a plain key-chord, yet that chord cannot be approached by the former harmonic steps,

—at least if cliché is to be avoided. Delius uses the Authentic full close but once in the cello sonata, though he uses the half-close on several occasions (bars 68, 244, etc.).

The cliché is more fatal to music than to any other art. For music is the art that is all creation. Like nature, its every manifestation is new and its material *sui generis*, appropriate to the one occasion and inappropriate to all others. Nature makes no two things alike, whether sheep or Chinamen. She does not quote. She has no clichés. She is inimitable; and music is the same. All arts of universal significance (which is to say, of objective character) are the same also, though not to equal degree. The art of Shakespeare is inimitable for the reason that it is generated by a ceaseless creative impulse. Not even Shakespeare could parody himself. Coleridge once said that often he had tried to write in the style of Shakespeare, sometimes with apparent success, but only to find later that what he had imitated was the art of some Fletcher, Massinger, or other Elizabethan. The art of Whitman is similarly inimitable. Serious parodies and stupid burlesques alike fail to echo even his errors and absurdities, for his art is as universal as music or nature and his terms are exact, the "bodie" that of the "soule forme doth take." Thus every really musical phrase is a living, independent spell-word. When it is not such, it means that the soul is out and that the piece must die. Alfred Casella may write "à la manière de" Wagner, Fauré, Brahms, Debussy, Strauss, and Franck, as in his 1911 set of parodies; and Ravel may write in the style of Casella and Casella in the style of Ravel, as in the 1914 set: but what is imitated is literally the manner, not the soul, of each pattern. No man can imitate another's smile or eye-glance. If these are imitable, then it is for the reason that they are insincere and of the order of the dead cliché.

Art echoes nothing. We may on first acquaintance with a piece of music feel the presence of some other piece; but as we penetrate its depths and see the thing as it truly is we lose sight of that apparent similarity. If however the similarity is real, a matter of depth as well as of surface, then we have false art, which is no art at all, but an imitation or gathering together of somebody else's mannerisms. Time is the judge and test. It destroys what is imitative; what is original it fills with still stronger life.

Yet why is it that the works even of the masters die? In other words, why is it that the masters repeat themselves, and that the cliché destroys some of their art? The answer I think is simple enough. Man cannot be always creating. His power of production is limited. Creation is of the soul, and at times the soul must for a season lie fallow. None understands this better in the

abstract than the creative artist, but it is not always given to a man to know when he is in need of rest. He therefore works while he should not work. The product of such work is barrenness. It is work of the mind merely, the result of habit, of a well-exercised, automatic technique, and in it the cliché is inevitable. This is I believe the explanation of the failures of the masters; for the alternative idea (that they are not fully in control of material and subject) cannot be entertained if the master is truly a master. The music of the great composers fails only when unwittingly put together without inspiration; which is perhaps one reason why Browning was called upon to say,—

It must oft fall out  
That one whose labour perfects any work  
Shall rise from it with eye so worn that he  
Of all men least can measure the extent  
Of what he has accomplished,—

thereby, it seems to me, at once challenging the critic, and justifying his existence.

Thus our cliché belongs to music that is "made" and not created. It is the manufacture of the mighty machine of music functioning alone along a common path. It represents movement along the line of least resistance. If consistent throughout a piece, as in a "shop-ballad," it may result in pleasant enough music. But if occasional and casual, as in Mr. Ashton's *Serenade*, it is bad, destroying the individuality of the thing it touches.

I venture to point a moral for educationalists and examiners. As things are to-day, teaching and examining are carried on by means of the cliché. The vast army of "coaches for examinations" proves this,—men who have specialised in the reduction of knowledge to the dryest, most abstract terms. This is bad, since education is literally creation, as also is everything appertaining to music, be it no more than the playing of a Clementi pianoforte study. *Mr.* I quote a passage from Mark Rutherford?—

. . . . He always insisted upon it that there is no training more necessary for children than that of teaching them not merely to speak the truth in the ordinary, vulgar sense of the term, but to speak it in a much higher sense, by rigidly compelling, point by point, a correspondence of the words with the fact external or internal. He would never tolerate in his own children a mere hackneyed, borrowed expression, but demanded exact portraiture . . . he maintained that the principal reason why people are so uninteresting is not that they have nothing to say. It is rather that they will not face the labour of saying in their own tongue what they have to say, but cover it up and conceal it in commonplace, so that we get, not what



they themselves behold and what they think, but a hieroglyphic or symbol invented as the representative of a certain class of objects or emotions, and as inefficient to represent a particular object or emotion as "x" or "y" to set forth the relation of Hamlet to Ophelia . . .

I venture to point also a moral for composers. There is no need for excessive novelty in art. The once dead cliché may be made to flower again if the man puts his true self into his music, for as Voltaire said, "By *style*, the most general things are made unique and singular again, the most feeble are strengthened, and the simplest are filled with grandeur." Whitman knew that the style was the man himself and that anything stereotyped was fatal to art. In his private injunctions to himself at the outset of his life he said, "Poet! beware lest your poems are made in the spirit that comes from the study of pictures of things—and not from the spirit that comes from contact with real things themselves. Avoid all 'poetical' similes, be faithful to the perfect likelihoods of nature. Make no quotations and no reference to any other writer." This is the hard way of creation, but in the end it is the easy way for the reason that there is no other that leads to life and individuality. A year before his death, writing reminiscently of his beginnings, Whitman remarked, "I had great trouble in leaving out the stock poetical touches, but I succeeded at last."

SYDNEY GREW.

## SAILOR SHANTIES

### II.

SHANTIES may be roughly divided, as regards their use, into two classes (a) Hauling shanties and (b) Windlass and Capstan. The former class accompanied the setting of the sails, and the latter the weighing of the anchor, or "warping her in" to the wharf, etc. Capstan shanties were also used for pumping ship. The subdivisions of each class are interesting, and the nature of the work involving "walk away," "stamp and go," "sweating her up," "hand over hand" and other types of shanty would make good reading; but nautical details, however fascinating, must be economised in a musical article.

Capstan shanties are readily distinguishable by their music. The operation of walking round the capstan (pushing the capstan bars in front of them) was continuous and not intermittent. Both tune and chorus were as a rule longer than those of the hauling shanty, and there was much greater variety of rhythm. Popular songs—if they had a chorus, or refrain, could be, and were, effectively employed for windlass and capstan work. "Shenandoah" (already quoted) is a good example of the free rhythm tune, as is also the following haunting melody,—almost impossible of transcription in cold print, so subtly varied and elusive is its phrasing:—

#### LOWLANDS.

*Solo. Slowly, and with very free rhythm.* *The Shanty.*

*Introduction. Quasi rect.* } Low-lands, Low-lands, A-way, my John! Low-lands, a -

*Chorus.*

way, *Solo.* I heard them say, My dol-lar and a half a

*Solo.* day. A dol-lar and a half a day is a Hoo-sier's pay.

*Chorus.*

Low-lands, Low lands, a - way, my John! A dol-lar and a half a

*Chorus.*

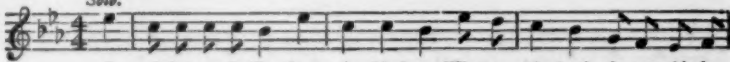
day is ve-ry good pay. My dol-lar and a half a day.

An interesting point about this shanty is that—whether by accident or design—it exhibits a rhythmic device commonly practised by mediæval composers, known as *proportio sesquialtera*. Expressed in modern notation it would mean the interpolation of bars of  $\frac{3}{4}$ -time in the course of a composition which was in  $\frac{6}{8}$ -time. The number of quavers would of course be the same in each bar, but the rhythm would be different.

Of the more rhythmic capstan shanties, the following rollicking tune (known to every sailor) is a fair sample:—


## JOHNNY COMES DOWN TO HILO.

*Solo.*

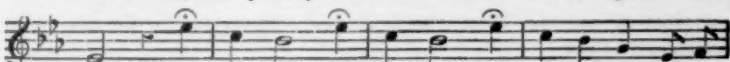


I neb-ber see de like since I bin born, When a big buck nig-ger wid de

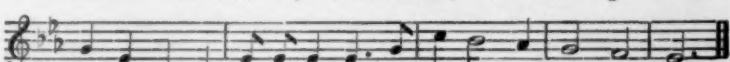
*Chorus.*



sea boots on, Sez John-ny come down to Hi-lo,— O poor old



man. Oh wake her, Oh shake her, Oh wake dat gel wid de

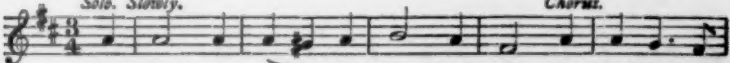


blue dress on, When Johnny comes down to Hi-lo,— O poor old man.

But sentimental tunes had their place at the capstan also:—

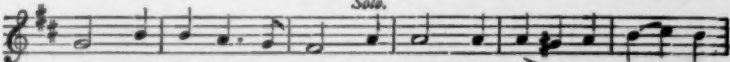
## GOODBYE FARE YE WELL.

*Solo. Slowly.*




I thought I heard the old man say, Good-bye, fare-ye-

*Chorus.*

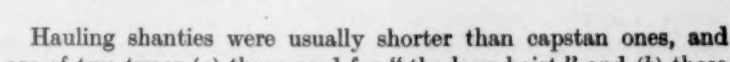


- well, Good-bye, fare-ye-well. I thought I heard the old man

*Solo.*



*Chorus.*



say, Hoo-ray, my boys, we're home-wad bound.

Hauling shanties were usually shorter than capstan ones, and are of two types (a) those used for "the long hoist" and (b) those

required for "the short pull" or "sweating up." (Americans called them the long and the short drag). The former was used when beginning to hoist sails, when the gear would naturally be slack and moderately easy to manipulate. It had two short choruses with a double pull in each. In the following example, the pulls are marked  $\wedge$  :—

## REUBEN RANZO.

*Solo. Briskly.* *Chorus.*  $\wedge$  *Solo.*

Oh pi - ty poor Reu - ben Ran - zo.  $\wedge$  Ran - zo, boys, Ran - zo. Oh

*Chorus.*  $\wedge$

poor old Reu - ben Ran - zo.  $\wedge$  Ran - zo, boys... Ran - zo.

It is easy to see how effective a collective pull at each of these points would be, while the short intervals of solo would give time for shifting the hands on the rope and making ready for the next combined effort.

When the sail was fully hoisted and the gear taut, a much stronger pull was necessary in order to make everything fast, so the shanty was then changed for a "sweating up" one, in which there was only one short chorus and one very strong pull :—

## HAUL THE BOWLIN'.

*Solo.* *Chorus.*

We'll haul the bow - lin' so ear - ly in the morn - ing. We'll

$\wedge$

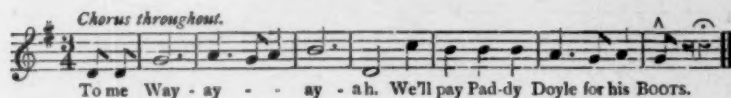
haul the bow - lin', the bow - lin' haul.

So much effort was now required on the pull that it was difficult to sing a musical note at that point. The last word was therefore usually shouted.

One tune of this type (when a special collective effort was required) was that used to "bunt up" the foresail or mainsail in furling. In this operation the canvas of the sail was doubled intensively until it formed a smooth conical bundle. This was called a "bunt," and a strong collective effort was required to get it on

to the yard. Only one short tune was ever used for this bunting operation. It differs from all other shanties in being sung *tutti* throughout :—

## PADDY DOYLE'S BOOTS.



The same words were sung over and over again, but very occasionally a different text would be substituted. Capt. Whall gives two alternatives which were sometimes used :—

“ We'll all drink brandy and gin ”

and

“ We'll all shave under the chin.”

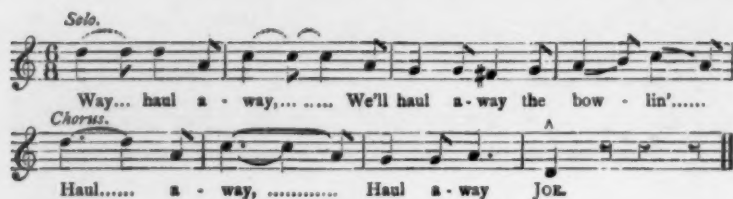
Mr. Morley Roberts also told me that a variant in his ship was :—

“ We'll all throw dirt at the cook.”

For “pull-and-haul” shanties, the shantyman took up his position near the workers (he did no work himself) and announced the shanty,—sometimes by singing the first line. This established the tune to which they were to supply the chorus. For capstan shanties he usually did the same. He is generally shown in pictures as sitting on the capstan, but so far as I can learn, he more usually took up his position on or against the knightheads. Each shanty had one or two stereotyped verses, after which the shantyman extemporised on any topics he chose. There was no need for any connection or relevancy between one verse and another, nor were rhymes required. The main thing that mattered was that the rhythm should be preserved, and that the words should be such as would keep the workers merry. Great license was taken in this respect, and the intimacy of the shantyman's topics was such as to make his extemporised verses unprintable. As Capt. Whall says—no seaman in a cargo-carrying ship ever heard a “decent” shanty, and in passenger vessels the shantyman was given the option of “decent words or no shanty.” He mentions the notorious “Hog's-eye man” (to which I refer later) as a case in point. It is curious that some of the loveliest melodies were those to which the lowdest kind of words were usually fitted. The following is an instance. Only a few verses are fit for print :—



## HAUL, HAUL AWAY.



Verse 2. King Louis was the King of France,  
Before the Revolution.  
Way haul away, etc.

Verse 3. King Louis got his head cut off,  
And spoiled his constitution.  
Way haul away, etc.

A few shanties had a definite narrative which was adhered to, extemporaneous verses being added only if the regulation ones did not spin out to the end of the job in hand. One of the most popular of these was "Reuben Ranzo" above quoted. It had two usual versions, one with a happy ending (the captain took him into his cabin and "learned him navigation," afterwards marrying him to his daughter) and the other concluding with the tragedy of Ranzo being led to the gangway to receive "five-and-furty" lashes for his dirty habits. (In yet another version the indignant crew threw him overboard).

The importance of a shantyman could not be overestimated. A good shantyman with a pretty wit was worth his weight in gold. He was a privileged person, and was excused all work save light or odd jobs.

Like all traditional tunes, some shanties are in the ancient modes, and others in the modern major and minor keys. It is the habit of the "folksonger" (I am not alluding to our recognised folk-song experts) to find "modes" in every traditional tune. It will suffice therefore, to say that shanties follow the course of all other traditional music. Many are modern, and easily recognisable as such; others are modal in character, *e.g.* :—

## STAND TO YOUR GROUND

*Solo.* *Chorus.* *Solo.*

Sal - ly am de gal dat - I lub dear - ly. Way, sing Sal - ly;... O,

*Chorus.*

Sal - ly am de gal dat I lub dear - ly. Hi - lo, John Brown, stand to your ground.

## WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE DRUNKEN SAILOR

*Shantyman.*

What shall we do with the drunk - en sai - lor?

What shall we do with the drunk - en sai - lor? What shall we do with the

drunk - en sai - lor, Ear - ly in the morn - ing. etc.

## THE HOG'S-EYE MAN.

*Solo.*

Oh, de Hog's-eye man is de man fer me; He war raised 'way down in

*Chorus.*

Ten - nes-see Oh, Hog's-eye, oh; Row de boat a - shore fer de Hog's-eye,

Steady on a jig with the Hog's-eye, Oh; She wants de Hog's-eye man.

Others fulfil to a certain extent modal conditions, but are nevertheless in keys.

## STORMALONG.

*Shantyman (slowly).* *Chorus.*

Old Stor - my he was a bully old man, Tib-by way - oh Storm - a -

*Solo.*

- long. Oh poor old Stor - my's dead..... and gone,

*Chorus (quickly).*

Ay, ay, ay, Mis - ter Storm - a - long.

*cf. also Good-bye, fare ye well (above).*

Like many other folk-songs, certain shanties originally no doubt in a mode were, by the insertion of leading notes, converted into the minor key. There was also the tendency on the part of the modern sailor to turn his minor key into a major one. I sometimes find sailors singing in the major, nowadays, tunes which the very old men of my boyhood used to sing in the minor. A case in point is "Haul away Joe," already quoted. Miss Smith is correct in giving it the minor form which once obtained on the Tyne, and I am inclined to hazard the opinion that that was the original form, and not, as now, the following :—

*Solo.*

Way, haul a - way,... We'll haul a - way the bow - lin',...

*Chorus.*

Way, haul a - way,..... haul a - way Joe.

In later times I have also heard *The Drunken Sailor* (a distinctly modal tune) sung in the major as follows :—

What shall we do with the drunk - en sai - lor?

What shall we do with the drunk - en sai - lor, &c.

I have generally found that these perversions of the tunes are due to sailors who took to the sea as young men in the last days of the sailing ship, and consequently did not imbibe to the full the old traditions. With the intolerance of youth they assumed that the modal turn given to a shanty by the older sailor was the mark of ignorance since it did not square with their ideas of a major or minor key. This experience is common to all folk-tune collectors.

Other characteristics, for example :—(a) different words to the same melody, (b) different melodies to the same or similar words, need not be enlarged upon here as they will be self-evident when a definitive collection is published.

Of the usual troubles incidental to folk-song collecting it is unnecessary to speak. But the collection of shanties involves difficulties of a special kind. In taking down a folk-song from a rustic, one's chief difficulty is surmounted when one has broken down his shyness and induced him to sing. There is nothing for him to do then but get on with the song. Shanties however, being labour songs, one is "up against" the strong psychological connection between the song and its manual acts. Two illustrations will explain what I mean.

A friend of mine who lives in Kerry wished a collector to hear some of the traditional keening, and an old woman with the reputation of being the best keener in the district, when brought to the house to sing the funeral chants, made several attempts and then replied in a distressed manner :—"I can't do it ; there's no Body." This did not mean that she was unwilling to keen in the absence of a corpse, but that she was unable to do so. Just before giving up in despair my friend was seized with a brain wave, and asked her if it would suffice for him to lie down on the floor and personate the corpse. When he had done this the old woman found herself able to get on with the keening.

An incident related to me quite casually by Sir Walter Runciman throws a similar light on the inseparability of a shanty and its labour. He described how one evening several north country ships happened to be lying in a certain port. All the officers and crews were ashore leaving only the apprentices aboard, some of whom as he remarked were "very keen on shanties," and their suggestion of passing away the time by singing some was received with enthusiasm. The whole party of about thirty apprentices at once collected themselves aboard one vessel, sheeted home the main topsail, and commenced to haul it up to the tune of "Boney was a warrior," changing to "Haul the Boylin'" for "sweating up." In the enthusiasm of their singing and the absence of any officer to call "'Vast hauling" they continued operations

until they broke the topsail yard in two, when the sight of the wreckage and the fear of consequences brought the singing to an abrupt conclusion. In my then ignorance, I naturally asked:—"Why couldn't you have sung shanties without hoisting the topsail?" and the reply was:—"How could we sing a shanty without having our hands on the rope?" Here we have the whole psychology of the labour song:—the old woman could not keen without the "body," and the young apprentices could not sing shanties apart from the work to which they belonged. The only truly satisfactory results which I ever get nowadays from an old sailor are when he has been stimulated by conversation to become reminiscent, and croons his shanties almost sub-consciously. Whenever I find a sailor willing to declaim shanties in the style of a song I begin to be a little suspicious of his seamanship. In one of the journals of the Folk-Song Society, there is an account of a sailor who formed a little party of seafaring men to give public performances of shanties on the concert platform. No doubt this was an interesting experience for the listeners, but that a self-conscious performance such as this could represent the old shanty-singing I find it difficult to believe. Of course I have had sailors sing shanties to me in a fine declamatory manner, but I usually found one of three things to be the case:—the man was a "sea lawyer"; or had not done much deep-sea sailing; or his seamanship only dated from the decline of the sailing vessel.

It is doubtless interesting to the folksonger to see in print shanties taken down from an individual sailor with his individual melodic twirls and twiddles. But since no two sailors ever sing the same shanty quite in the same manner, there must necessarily be some means of getting at the tune, unhampered by these individual idiosyncrasies, which are quite a different thing from what folk-song students recognise as "variants." The power to discriminate can only be acquired by familiarity with the shanty as it was in its palmy days. The collector who now comes upon the scene at this late time of day must necessarily be at a disadvantage. The ordinary methods which he would apply to a folk-song break down in the case of a labour song. Manual actions were the soul of the shanty; eliminate these and you have only the skeleton of what was once a living thing. It is quite possible, I know, to push this line of argument too far, but everyone who knows anything about seamanship must feel that a shanty nowadays cannot be other than a pale reflection of what it once was.

That is why I deprecate the spurious authenticity conferred by print upon isolated versions of shanties sung by individual old men. When the originals are available it seems to me pedantic



and academic to put into print the comic mispronunciations of well-known words by old and uneducated seamen.

And this brings me to the last difficulty which confronts the collector with no previous knowledge of shanties. As a mere matter of dates, any sailors now remaining from sailing ship days must necessarily be very old men. I have found that their octogenarian memories are not always to be trusted. On one occasion an old man sang quite glibly a tune which was in reality a *pasticcio* of three separate shanties all known to me. I have seen similar results in print, since the collector arrived too late upon the scene to be able to detect the tricks which an old man's memory played him.

I have already spoken of shanties which were derived from popular songs, also the type which contained a definite narrative. Except where a popular song was adapted, the form was usually rhymed or more often unrhymed couplets. The topics were many and varied but the chief ones were (1) popular heroes such as Napoleon, and "Santy Anna." That the British sailor of the 18th Century should hate every Frenchman and yet make a hero of Bonaparte is one of the mysteries which has never been explained. Another mystery is the fascination which Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna (1795-1876) exercised over the sailor. He was one of the many Mexican "Presidents" and was defeated by the American General Taylor in 1847. That did not prevent the British sailor presenting him in the light of an invariable victor, until he was led out to be shot (he really died a natural death) by persons unknown. (2) The sailor had mythical heroes too; e.g. "Ranzo" (already mentioned) and "Stormy" who was the theme of many shanties. No sailor could ever give the least explanation of them, and so they remain the last echoes of long forgotten sagas. (3) High sounding, poetic, or mysterious words such as "Lowlands," "Shenandoah," "Rolling river," "Hilo," "Mobile Bay," "Rio Grande" had a great fascination, as their constant recurrence in many shanties shows. (4) The sailor also sang much of famous ships, such as "The Flying Cloud," "The Henry Clay," or "The Victory," and famous lines such as "The Black Ball." Even famous shipowners were celebrated in song, as witness "Mr. John Tapscott," in "We're all bound to go," which is given on the next page. (5) Love affairs (in which Lizer Lee and other damsels constantly figured) were an endless topic. (6) But chiefly did Jack sing of affairs connected with his ship. He never sang of "the rolling main," "the foaming billows," "the storm clouds," etc. These are the stock-in-trade of the landsman; they were too real for the sailor to sing about. He had the instinct of the primitive man

## WE'RE ALL BOUND TO GO.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The first staff begins with a *Solo.* marking and ends with a *Chorus.* marking. The lyrics are: "Oh John-ny was a ro-ver and to-day he sails a-way. Heave a -". The second staff continues the melody with lyrics: "- way..... my John-ny, Heave a - way - - ay..... Oh". The third staff continues with lyrics: "John-ny was a ro-ver and to-day he sails a-way. Heave a -". The fourth staff concludes the piece with lyrics: "- way..... my bul-ly boys, We're all bound to go.....".

Verse 2. As I was walking out one day,  
Down by the Albert Dock.  
Heave away, etc.  
I heard an emigrant Irish girl  
Conversing with Tapscott.  
Heave away, etc.

Verse 3. Good morning, Mr. Tapscott, sir;  
"Good morn, my gel," sez he.  
Heave away, etc.  
It's have you got a Packet Ship  
All bound for Amerikkee.  
Heave away, etc.

which forbids mention of natural forces of evil omen. But intimate or humorous matters such as the failings of his officers, the quality of the food, the rate of pay, or other grievances were treated with vigour and emphasis. Like the Britisher of to-day, he would put up with any hardship so long as he were permitted to grouse about it. The shantyman gave humorous expression to this grouching which deprived it of the element of sulks. Steam let off in this way was a wholesome preventive of mutiny.

The choruses were usually jingles, with no relevance save maintenance of the rhythm.

One feature of the words may be noted. The sailor's instinct for romance was so strong that in his choruses at least (no matter

how "hair curling" the solo might be) he always took the crude edge off the concrete and presented it as an abstraction if possible. For example; he knew perfectly well that one meaning of "to blow" was to knock or kick. He knew that discipline in Yankee packets was maintained by corporeal methods; so much so that the mates (to whom the function of knocking the "packet rats" about was delegated) were termed 1st, 2nd, and 3rd "blowers" or strikers, and in the shanty he sang "Blow the man down." "Knock" or "kick" (as I have recently seen in a printed collection) was too crudely realistic for him. In like manner the humorous title "Hogs-eye" veiled the coarse intimacy of the term which it represented. And that is where—when collecting shanties from the "longshore" mariner of to-day—I find him (if he is uneducated) so tiresome. He not only wants to explain to me as a landsman the exact meaning (which I know already) of terms which the old type of sailor, with his natural delicacy, avoided discussing, but he tries where possible to work them into his shanty,—a thing the sailor of old time never did. So that when one sees in print expressions which sailors did not use, it is presumptive evidence that the collector has been imposed upon by a salt of the "sea lawyer" type.

Perhaps I ought to make this point clearer. Folk-song collecting was once merely an artistic pursuit. Now it has become a flourishing industry of high commercial value. From the commercial point of view it is essential that results should be printed and circulated as widely as possible. Some knowledge of seamanship is an absolute necessity where folk-shanties are concerned. The mere collector nowadays does not possess that knowledge; it is confined to those who have had practical experience of the sea, but who will never print their experiences. The mere collector *must* print his versions. What is unprinted must remain unknown; what is printed is therefore accepted as authoritative, however misleading it may be. Many highly educated men, of which Captain Whall is the type, have followed the sea. It is from them that the only really trustworthy information is forthcoming. But so far as I can judge, it is uneducated men who appear to sing to collectors nowadays, and I have seen many a quiet smile on the lips of the educated sailor when he is confronted with printed versions of the uneducated seaman's performances. For example, one of the best known of all Shanties is "The Hog's-eye man." I have seen this entitled "The Hog-eyed man," and even "The Ox-eyed Man." Every old sailor knew the meaning of the term. Whall and Bullen, who were both sailors, use the correct expression, "Hog-eye." The majority of sailors of my acquaintance called it

"Hog's-eye." Did decency permit I could show conclusively how Whall and Bullen are right and the mere collector wrong. It must suffice, however, for me to say that the term "Hog's-eye" or "Hog-eye" had nothing whatever to do with the optic of the "Man" who was sung about. I could multiply instances, but this one is typical and must suffice.

We hear a great deal of the coarseness and even lewdness of the shanty, but I could wish a little more stress were laid on the sailor's natural delicacy. Jack was always a gentleman in feeling. Granted his drinking, cursing, and amours; but were not these until Victorian times the hall mark of every gentleman ashore? The Rabelaisian jokes of the shantyman were solos, the sound of which would not travel far beyond the little knot of workers who chuckled over them. The choruses—shouted out by the whole working party—would be heard all over the ship, and even penetrate ashore if she were in port. Hence, in not a single instance do the choruses of any shanty contain a coarse expression.

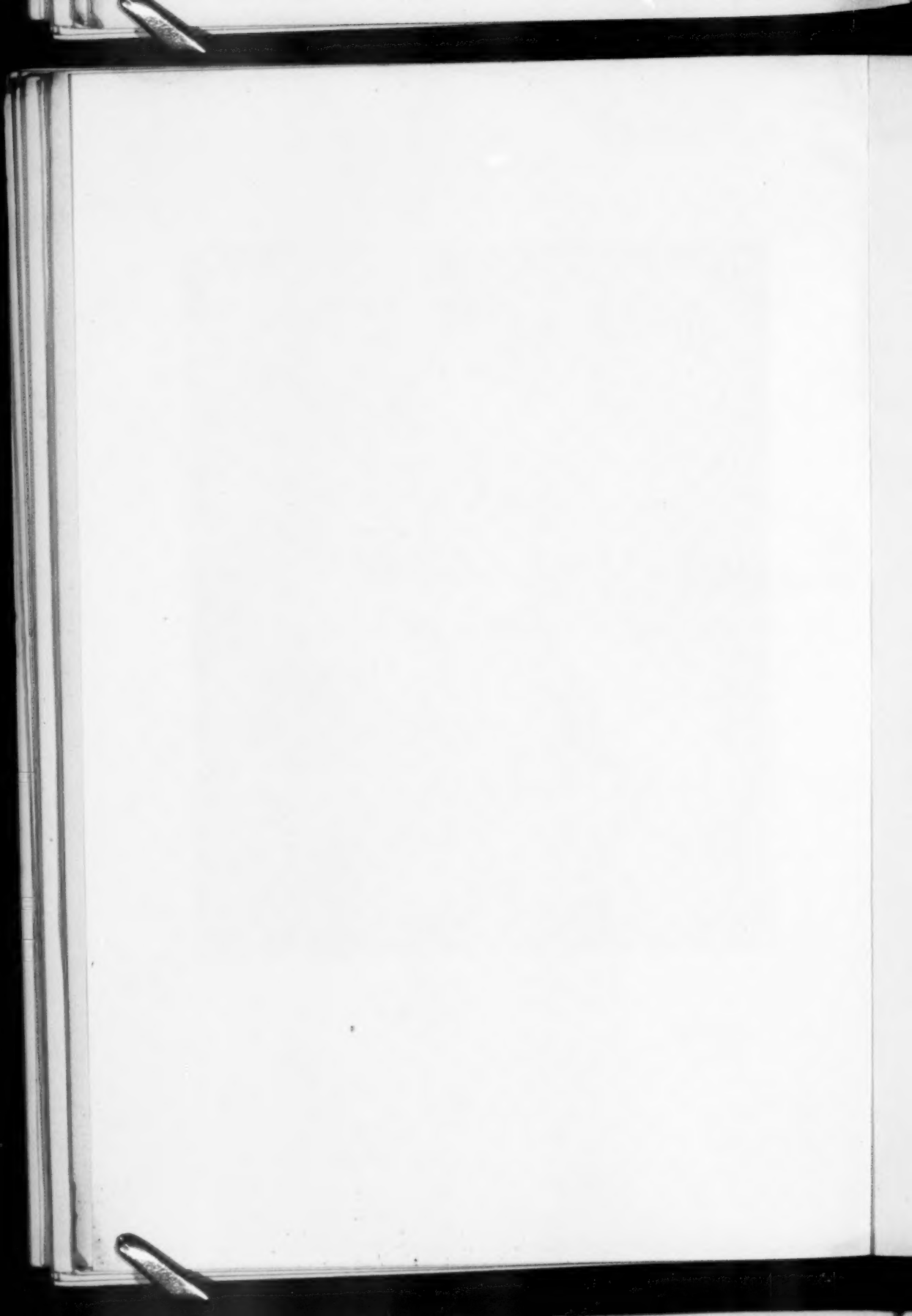
One final remark about collectors which has an important bearing upon the value of their work. There were two classes of sailing vessels that sailed from English ports,—the coaster or the mere collier that plied between the Tyne or Severn and Boulogne, and the Southpainer, under which term was comprised all deep-sea vessels. On the collier or short voyage vessel the crew was necessarily a small one, and the Shanty was more or less of a makeshift, adapted to the capacity of the limited members of the crew. Purely commercial reasons precluded the engagement of any Shantyman specially distinguished for his musical attainments. Consequently, so far as the Shanty was concerned, "any old thing would do." On the Southpainer, however, things were very different. The Shantyman was usually a person of considerable musical importance, who sang his songs in a more or less finished manner; his melodies were clean, clear-cut things without any of the folk-songer's quavers and wobbles. I heard them in the 'seventies and 'eighties before the sailing-ship had vanished, consequently I speak of the things I know.

R. R. TERRY.



DR. R. R. TERRY  
From a painting by Philip Haggren





## THE ENGLISH SCHOOL OF PAINTING\*

### I.

THE first thing that strikes us about almost every work of art is its nationality. As soon as we see, for instance, a piece of embroidery we say "That is Spanish" or "That is Chinese" or "That is Russian" as the case may be. This applies especially to painting; so that when we hear of a picture as Venetian or Flemish we know at once what its character will be, for the paintings of different races are as different as their languages. Now just as each language has been evolved to suit the mode of thought of its users, so has each school of painting been evolved—with this further modification, that it must be suitable to the climate.

Climate affects a school of painting in two ways; directly, because each nation has to use a medium that will be permanent in the climate of its own country, and indirectly because climate is the main influence on the architecture which the painting is to embellish. English painting is at a disadvantage in that no medium has as yet been discovered which can withstand the effects of the English climate.

Now as each national school of painting expresses a national point of view in a style suitable to its country, so each school is best understood and enjoyed by the nation to which the painters belong, and they see in their paintings a most precious inheritance and a great monument to their national feelings. As Mr. Bentley has said—

The people of Spain think Cervantes  
Equal to half a dozen Dantes,  
An opinion resented most bitterly  
By the people of Italy.

An Englishman does not concern himself greatly whether Cervantes or Dante is the greater, but he is quite sure that Shakespeare is equal to half a dozen of either.

\* It has been thought that the readers of this magazine might find that this essay, apart from its intrinsic interest, threw some light upon the question of nationality in music.—[Ed.]

How is it then that the great bulk of Englishmen neither know nor care anything about the great English painters? This is a question that I shall try to answer.

Before dealing with the historical side of the question I must point out a social characteristic of the English. It is that, so far as painting is concerned, the English are divided into two classes whose ideas are as different and as opposed to one another as those of any two separate nations. There is no satisfactory name for either of these classes and we can only call them the governing class and the governed, or the aristocracy and the mob, or the gentlemen and the rest. None of these words suggests exactly the distinction that I mean, but in the eighteenth century these classes were divided almost exactly as the landlords and the tenants. For my present purpose I shall speak of them as the Squirarchy and the People.

Each of these classes has had one great fault—that of the Squirarchy has been stupidity and that of the People a tendency to imitate the Squirarchy.

There are two important facts about this division of the classes—one is that since the Protestant reformation the Squirarchy have been the only people in a position to patronise the arts; the other is this—that in this period, the whole of the great English school of painting has come from the people, the Squirarchy having produced only two notable painters in over three centuries.

Up to the time of the Reformation all the arts flourished in England and it was probably the foremost artistic country of Europe. The English music was the best and so was the English stained glass, manuscript and embroidery—which last was in great demand for export to France and Italy.

Very little painting has survived the destruction of the Protestants and the Puritans, and not a single painter's name has come down to us: but what remains is better than the average of contemporary work in other countries, at any rate up to the middle of the fifteenth century.

The painter of those days worked under ideal conditions. He and the carver worked together under the direction of the architect—for all wood-work and most interior stone-work was painted in those days. As a boy he prepared colours and the surfaces to be painted on, and thus earned his living while receiving the soundest of training. The painters' guilds protected him from exploitation, enabled him to travel for study and punished him if he used fugitive colours or otherwise defrauded his patrons.

The chief patron of the arts was, of course, the Church. Each monastery was in communication with others and with the cathedral towns, and all were in touch with Rome. Intellectual activity

was nourished by this intercourse, and scholars, artists, and craftsmen travelled from monastery to monastery all over Europe.

Painting was in demand for all classes of society. The nobility required portraits for their houses and religious paintings for their chapels and oratories. The Church required altar pieces and symbolical designs, and also narrative paintings that illustrated the Old and New Testaments and the teaching of the Church for the benefit of the illiterate.

So far the history of painting in England is similar to that of painting in the rest of Christian Europe, but from the time of Henry VIII it is quite otherwise. Among the havoc that Henry VIII wrought in the social conditions of England was the crippling of the graphic arts, and his heresy struck a blow at English painting from which it took two hundred years to recover. The effect of the ousting of the Church was fourfold. Firstly, it took away the demand for any painting except that of portraits. Secondly, it isolated England from intercourse with the rest of Europe. Thirdly, it put all the patronage of painting into the hands of the Squirarchy. Fourthly, the plundering of the Church property led to the destruction of the work which enshrined the English tradition.

All these misfortunes fell upon England just at the time when painting was coming to the wonderful harvest that was already ripening in Italy and that came to fruition in Spain, Holland, and Flanders a century later.

While English painting was thus crippled, there came to England a foreigner whose genius had developed unhampered. Hans Holbein the younger had painted religious subjects in his own country. He came to England and painted portraits of the King, his wives, and a great number of the nobility. He was a great portrait painter and a consummate craftsman. His portraits delighted his patrons by their likeness and amused the ignorant by the exotic treatment of accessories. They also had the attraction of novelty, for Holbein was probably the first to use in England the method of varnish painting invented by the Van Eycks.

The example of Holbein might have set on foot a school of English portraiture if his temperament had been at all in keeping with that of the English. As it was, his laborious German method was utterly unsuited to the direct and spontaneous ways of the English painters. He had a number of English followers who have left a few very good portraits, but the method soon died out. The influence of Holbein lasted longest in the miniature paintings of Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac and Peter Oliver.

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English than Holbein's had been, but his stay in England was not long enough to have any great influence.

The great renaissance of English painting that came in the eighteenth century was preceded by one man of genius a full century before his time. Samuel Cooper stands alone among the foreigners and their imitators. Not only was his vision purely English, but he expressed himself in that direct method of opaque oil-painting that has been the language, as it were, of every English painter since his day. We now know Cooper only as a miniaturist, but he probably painted in large as well, and it may have been these lost paintings that influenced Van Dyck. Whether it was these or the miniatures, it is certain that Van Dyck saw the suitability of Cooper's style and approximated his own style to it.

Van Dyck was an opportunist. He had immense ability without any great artistic personality. He learned to paint with astonishing skill in his native Flanders, afterwards travelling to Genoa where he acquired an Italian style; he then came to England and worked in a mongrel style that had certain English qualities but was utterly un-English in spirit.

All Van Dyck's work is tinged with insincerity; he was painstaking without being thorough, and mannered for the sake of manner. He gave the Squirarchy exactly what they wanted. He flattered his sitters, giving to each of them that look of conscious superiority that showed their breeding. He gave them all the same helpless hands with tapering fingers, not because he admired such, but because his sitters did. Van Dyck never presumed to paint an intimate portrait; he kept at a respectful distance and was as discreet as any flunkey.

Such a man could not fail to be a huge success both socially and financially, but his effect on painting was disastrous. He left the Squirarchy even more self-satisfied than he found them and made it harder than ever for an honest painter to get a living.

The success of Van Dyck, coupled with a visit from Rubens, convinced the Squirarchy that painting was a foreign thing that must be imported. They no more thought of it as indigenous to England than we do of bananas or ostrich feathers. There was, however, a still stronger influence at work to prejudice the patrons of art. Intercourse with the continent had again become possible and the Squirarchy began to travel. This new intercourse was quite unlike that of the middle ages; it was no longer of all classes, but was confined to the idle rich who took their sons on the "Grand Tour." The Squirarchy were impressed by the size and number of the pictures they saw in Italy, and they have ever since looked upon that country as the home of painting. To show their taste

and the extent of their travels they brought back coach-loads of fifth-rate Italian paintings as well as bad copies of antique statues and other rubbish. Very few good pictures came to England in this way, although numbers of English houses are filled to this day with canvases labelled "School of Raphael," "School of Correggio," and so on.

One of Van Dyck's un-English ways was that of employing less successful painters to do backgrounds, clothes, and accessories under his direction. All these assistants were foreigners except one—William Dobson. Dobson was a very good painter whose natural style resembled that of Samuel Cooper. He was compelled by poverty to work for Van Dyck and to imitate his style. On Van Dyck's death he was appointed Sergeant Painter to the king, but he died in poverty a few years later.

For a century after Van Dyck's death the foreigners had the field to themselves. There were two good painters amongst them—Lely, a Dutchman, and Kneller, a German, but many of them had little beside their foreign birth to recommend them. Sir Peter Lely was a follower of Van Dyck, but his portraits are more intimate and sincere. He flattered his women sitters, but in his best work he seems to have done it through an honest enjoyment of beauty. His craftsmanship, though too deliberate and dispassionate, is superb of its kind. In Sir Godfrey Kneller we have a very different character. The greater part of his work is utter rubbish without character, without vitality, and often without skill.

He exaggerated flattery until it became grotesque and painted scores of portraits as alike as so many fashion plates. One would think that he must have been trying to find out what rubbish his patrons would pay for and how much flattery they would swallow. The fortune that he amassed suggests that he did not reach the limit of either. Yet this cynic had his honest moods. He had been a pupil of Rembrandt and could paint superbly when he chose. His good work is rare but he has left a few portraits that are not only finely painted, but are more English in character than the work of any other foreigner.

I have shown how the contempt of the art patrons and the inability of the Squirarchy to do any painting for themselves had starved English painting out of existence. The obstacles in the way of an English school seemed insurmountable. There was no national tradition on which to build, for it is only in the light of later work that we can see the prophetic nature of such work as that of Cooper and Dobson. The new painters had to invent their language before they could speak, and they must speak awhile before they could be understood. Whoever would begin must work like two

men, for he must earn his living in some other way. The thing seemed impossible, and yet, within a century of the death of Kneller the English school had found its language and burst into song as though with all the pent up energy of those two centuries of bondage.

In 1697 was born William Hogarth, one of the greatest painters that ever lived and one of the most courageous characters in all our history. A seven years' apprenticeship to a silversmith robbed him of the precious time when most painters are learning their craft, but it gave him that facility in the use of the graver which enabled him to earn a living. At the end of his apprenticeship he began engraving copper plates for the booksellers and thus earned a meagre subsistence while he painted.

There is no immature painting by Hogarth. His handling of oil-paint was, from the beginning, that of a master. The beauty of his style has hardly a parallel in the history of painting. He had no master to guide him and no tradition to support him. His painting was the spontaneous expression of a consummate artist who was also the finest type of Englishman. Hogarth tried to earn a living by painting but without success. The Squirarchy refused to consider his pictures as works of art, and the People, to whom they appealed, could not afford them. He did, therefore, exactly what Hokusai was to do a few years later in Japan. He made engravings of his pictures, printed them himself, and sold them to the People. Where he could not get fifty pounds for a picture he could sell hundreds of half-crown prints, and except for a few portraits the whole of his living was earned in this way. Such a method left Hogarth little time for painting. For every day that he painted he had to spend weeks in engraving, printing, and managing his shop. He was not a great engraver. His prints, though their craftsmanship is excellent, are mere transcripts from his paintings and have none of the qualities of original engraving.

To possess such genius and to be so hampered would have broken the heart of many a man, and would assuredly have broken Hogarth's if his creative power had had no other outlet than in his painting. Though it is only as a painter that he stands head and shoulders above his fellows, yet he was a great man whether we consider him as a moralist, a social reformer, a dramatist, a satirist, a critic, or a psychologist. In this last capacity, his only book, the *Analysis of Beauty* shows him a master of clear thinking and lucid explanation.

Hogarth failed only on the few occasions when he submitted to the wishes of the Squirarchy and painted historical subjects. The story of one of these failures is worth retelling as giving us a glimpse

of Hogarth's character. It is of a picture that now hangs in the National Gallery—"Sigismonda weeping over the heart of Guiscardo." I call it a failure because it is not as natural as his unhistorical paintings, but it is an able piece of work nevertheless and the colouring is particularly fine. This picture was commissioned by Sir Richard Grosvenor, who was delighted with it until it was finished and he received the bill for £400. Sir Richard was immensely rich but this was too much for him. He sent Hogarth an insulting letter telling him to find some other purchaser and giving as his reason that the performance was so "striking and inimitable that the constantly having it before one's eyes would be too often occasioning melancholy ideas to arise in one's mind, which a curtain's being drawn before it would not diminish the least."

Hogarth was deeply hurt and the "Sigismonda" was the last picture he ever painted. What pluck remained to him is shown by his reply, which was the following verse.

Nay 'tis so moving, that the knight  
Can't even bear it in his sight;  
Then who would tears so dearly buy,  
As give four hundred pounds to cry?  
I own he chose the prudent part,  
Rather to break his word than heart,  
And yet, methinks, 'tis ticklish dealing  
With one so delicate in feeling.

The contempt of the Squirarchy for the greatest of the English painters persists to this day. Not long ago I made some remark in praise of Hogarth to one of their number and he replied, "If I had the best picture Hogarth ever painted I should hang it in my servants' hall."

The next great name in English painting is that of Richard Wilson, the first of the English landscapists. He was Hogarth's junior by sixteen years and began by painting portraits. This brought him enough money to enable him to travel and he visited Italy. There he experimented in landscape and found his vocation. He was quite uninfluenced by Italian painting but the Italian scenery that had first inspired him remained his ideal and influenced his composition. He spent the rest of his life in England in great poverty and completely ignored by the art patrons. Happily for us he preferred to realise his exquisitely poetical visions, and sell them for little more than the cost of the materials, rather than return to the portraiture of which he was less a master. The influence of Wilson on the landscapists of the succeeding generations was enormous. His style was perfectly English and proved capable of endless de-



velopment. A number of younger painters soon followed the lead of Hogarth and Wilson, and, by the middle of the eighteenth century exhibitions of English pictures were organised and movements were on foot to establish free teaching for students.

Before speaking of the generation that followed Hogarth and Wilson I must point out a new influence that greatly helped the development of English painting. A new intercourse with the Continent had begun; for while the Squirarchy were filling their houses with Italian pictures the merchants had begun to trade with Holland. They found real enjoyment in the Dutch paintings and brought over great numbers of them. The bulk of these pictures remained in the Eastern counties, but they gradually spread all over the country. They included work by many of the best Dutch painters, and such men as Hobbema, Ruysdael, Cuyp, Potter, Koninck, De Hoogh and Teniers were well represented. The Dutch painters, and especially the Dutch landscape painters, had sufficient kinship with the English for their work to be understood by the English People. They acted as a stimulant on the new school; and thus, while the importation of Italian pictures only confused the English painters, the importation of Dutch pictures did something to make up for the lack of national tradition.

Thus, in spite of every discouragement, the English school was founded. Only patronage was needed to reap a full harvest from the ground that had lain fallow for so long. Whether the Squirarchy would ever have learned to appreciate and encourage the art of the People we cannot say, for just at this point the first painter of the Squirarchy arose and secured the patronage for himself.

Sir Joshua Reynolds put into practice all the un-English ideas of the Squirarchy. He sneered at the struggling English painters and set up the products of the Roman school as the only art worthy of the name. He showed the Squirarchy to themselves from the submissive standpoint that had made the fortune of Van Dyck with the same result. He used a technique which he persuaded them was Roman and they acceded at once to his claim to be the successor of Raphael. Worse than all this, he used his influence to get control of the new academy and saturated it with his teaching. The great danger of Reynolds' influence lay in this, that the one thing in which he seems to have been really sincere was his admiration of the Roman painters—of even the worst of them. He had studied in Rome and could therefore fraternise with the Squirarchy who had made the "Grand Tour" and lay down the law to the poor students who had never been out of England.

Reynolds was a snob and a tyrant, but he had real artistic ability and a great capacity for hard work. Of the merits of his painting

it is now impossible to form any just estimate, for the technical methods by which he obtained a resemblance to the old Roman masters caused his pictures to fade and crack even during his own lifetime. He was utterly ignorant and inappreciative of painting as a craft, and fumbled over problems to which any sign-painter could have shown him the solution.

According to his contemporaries he was a very great colourist and in the wrecks of his pictures we can see how successful he was in imitating the Roman massiveness and richness of design. Whatever the merits of Reynolds and his followers they are totally different from those of the rest of the English painters. This difference is not only of vision and of technique, but also of point of view towards painting as an art. To make this clear we have only to consider the English school apart from Reynolds.

The character of a school of painting is far too elusive a thing to be described in words. It is only possible to point out certain qualities of vision, of intention, and of expression that are common to the members of a school so as to suggest the highest common factor of their different personalities.

Each school is supreme in some particular quality; thus the Spanish painters excel in the subtle realisation of character, the Italian in decorative effect, the Dutch in perception of light. The quality which distinguishes the English painters and in which they excel all others is in their *sense of space*.

If you hang an English picture on the wall of a room you have enlarged the room by the amount of space represented; but if you hang up an Italian picture you have crowded the room by the introduction of so many more people or things. This is partly due to the difference of climate. In an Italian house there is space in plenty, and the pictures are required to fill the blank spaces and people the emptiness. In an English house there is no space to spare and light is precious, for both have been limited for the sake of warmth. One tendency of its pictures, therefore, must be to ease the crowdedness. They must give a feeling of greater space, and the people and things in them must live in the bigger world beyond the frames.

The Dutch most nearly approach the English in this quality. They have a sense of space, but it is a sense of limited space. When you look at a Dutch landscape you are looking out of a window; when you look at an English one you are standing in the open air. In a Dutch interior the windows admit light which concentrates the interest in the room—in an English one the windows extend the interest to infinity.

From their paintings I should infer that the Dutch find their

pleasure in their houses and have none of that love of the open air which is so marked a characteristic of the English.

In their use of paint the English painters show very strong characteristics. Their work throughout is notable for its astonishing directness. They worked with fluid creamy paint and laid it on with a full brush—a method that is only possible for a painter who knows exactly what he means to do. The fewness and slightness of their preparatory drawings show that they had a power of visualisation that has only been surpassed by the Chinese and Japanese.

Another characteristic quality of the English painters is their restraint. Their pictures are usually small in dimensions because in most English houses the windows are not large enough to throw an even light all over a large canvas.

Their colour is restrained into the narrow compass that best suits the oil medium. They could express themselves in simple colours as Bach could compose for a single instrument. It was not until Turner's last years that the whole orchestra was used with Wagnerian effect.

As they used colour, so also they used light and shade with no forcing of contrast or theatrical concentration.

The same may be said of their use of action. Their figures move with a natural grace and are to their surroundings what flowers are to a plant. There is none of that violent gesticulation which, in so many foreign pictures, makes the beholder sweat in sympathy with the models.

There is another quality in English painting which is harder to describe. It lies mainly in the brushwork and shows a sense of humour; just as the equivalent quality in Spanish painting shows intensity of purpose, and in Italian painting shows a conscious dignity.

PHILIP HAGREEN.

*To be continued.*

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

*Choral Orchestration.* By Cecil Forsyth. H. W. Gray and Co. \$1.50.

Few who knew as much about or could speak with such authority upon orchestration as Mr. Forsyth would have the patience to do what he would call the "dogwork" of this book. He has chosen, perhaps for its immaculate mediocrity, and orchestrated with a running commentary a four-part anthem with organ accompaniment; and he hopes thus to be useful to the rank and file of organists who put forth such buds every spring. Assuming no genius in others and carefully concealing his own brilliance he shows how much may be made good by method and plan and attention to detail. What he has assumed is good faith—that the writer, in fact, meant what he said; and, that being granted, he shows him how to make the most of it by means of an orchestral technique that gives ease and certainty. The book does not lend itself to citation since its good things depend entirely on their context. It contains plenty of quotation of the kind that Dr. Ethel Smyth has lately been advocating—the kind that the author writes himself. He is, we suspect, his own "schoolboy," possibly also his own Latin poet. The reader has other reasons too for not being bored.

A. H. F. S.

*Unfigured Harmony.* By Percy C. Buck. Clarendon Press, 2nd edition, 7s. 6d.

One remembers seeing years ago an article in a boy's paper on "How I taught a youngster to write poetry." Dr. Buck's aim is more modest; he proposes to teach boys—and at this time of day we must add girls—how to write verse, the verse of music, whereas the harmony books of our youth did not aim at much beyond the teaching of doggerel. This aim they pursued by dividing the deeds of mankind into "good" and "bad," while a few were grudgingly "allowed." Dr. Buck arrogates to himself no such competence: he deals less in rules than counsels: his highest praise is "musicianly"—can there be higher?—and his severest blame "misguided."

Modulations are first discussed, because "these must be settled quite definitely before the plan of the whole (piece) is decided upon." Then follows the harmonization of a melody, of an unfigured bass, of an inner part, and a chapter on ground basses. The author proposes no problem of which he does not offer an able if not also an adroit solution. We have marked a few sentences—A properly harmonized melody should sound like a composition, never like a harmony exercise—Reading string quartets helps to drive out the commonplaces of ordinary Church music—Imitation is the life of all true music; but music begins where one alters the unimportant details of the model while preserving the essentials—

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A rest should be seized on as a place where the under parts are to show their mettle, not to meander. The book is written with an eye upon the examiner's demands, and gentle satire upon his weaknesses is written when it is said of a progression that it "should be used sparingly except in genuine composition."

A. H. F. S.

*The Sackbut.* Vol. I, No. 1. Monthly. Price 6d. Winthrop Rogers.

"The Organist" (sometime "and Choirmaster") has lately acquired a new stop to his instrument—a "Sackbut." The new stop sticks out in front, really, like the bells of the trumpet stop found in some Spanish churches; but the result aimed at, to judge from the first number, is not so much an imposing appearance as effects of greater brilliancy. In his "Foreword" Mr. Philip Heseltine states the aim of the transmogrified paper to be—to promote the love and understanding of music "as an essential factor of modern life," to discover what is good and new and to rebuke what is bad, whether old or new, and to do these things without making a mystery of them.

With this in view Cecil Gray in "The task of Criticism" grinds to powder some graven images which had, he says, been set up, and proclaims the critic's true concern to be only with the purely spiritual quality of the work—a hard saying, whose virtue lies principally in its application. In a vital essay on the subject of words and music Robert Nichols puts a finger on what ails the song-composer; the truth of what he has to say is informed by charm of style and illustrated on a later page by E. J. Dent's song. Kaikhosru Sorabji tries to lash into a proper sense of their incompetence those who pretend to teach singing in this country and those who listen at concerts and pretend to think their results good; but each offender will probably manage to find a whipping-boy. "Prosdocius" has that to say about the *Village Romeo and Juliet* and the London Symphony which is worth thinking over.

A. H. F. S.

*L'Oeuvre de Richard Wagner à Paris.* Paris, Maurice Sénart et Cie. 92 pp., 24 pl. 25 frs.

This interesting monograph gives a detailed record of all Wagner performances, in concert room and theatre, that took place in Paris during the period 1850-1914. It is evident that no pains have been spared to make the record as complete and accurate as possible, and the result is a volume into which anyone may dip with entertainment, although it is to the Perfect Wagnerite that it will principally appeal. It is profusely illustrated with photographs of the most eminent French artists in their various rôles.

R. O. MORRIS.

*Les Couperin, Organistes de l'Eglise Saint-Gervais.* By Charles Bouvet. Paris, Librairie Delagrave. Price 19 frs.

This book is fascinating. A part of its 304 pages is given to details on remote ancestors and distant relatives of the heroes, to patiently collected deeds and documents, very dry, but useful in establishing facts, dates, and correcting old biographical errors. Such thoroughness ensures confidence. The dry parts are skipped and their dullness dissipated by the excellent plates.

The spirit of late seventeenth century music lives in plate II. It is a portrait of François Couperin, Sieur de Crouilly and his daughter Marguerite-Louise. The father plays the organ. His face is radiant. He is proud of his daughter, and well he might be. Such charm and beauty in a child already famous as singer and claveciniste are enough to make a man happy.

The dynasty of the Couperins is comparable to that of the Bachs. It includes the greatest French musician ever born, "Couperin Le Grand," and other great men. True, the compositions of the last Couperin, Gervais-François, who died in 1826, Organist of Saint Gervais, are of small value. But is the music of J. C. Bach, son of the greatest Sebastian, any better?

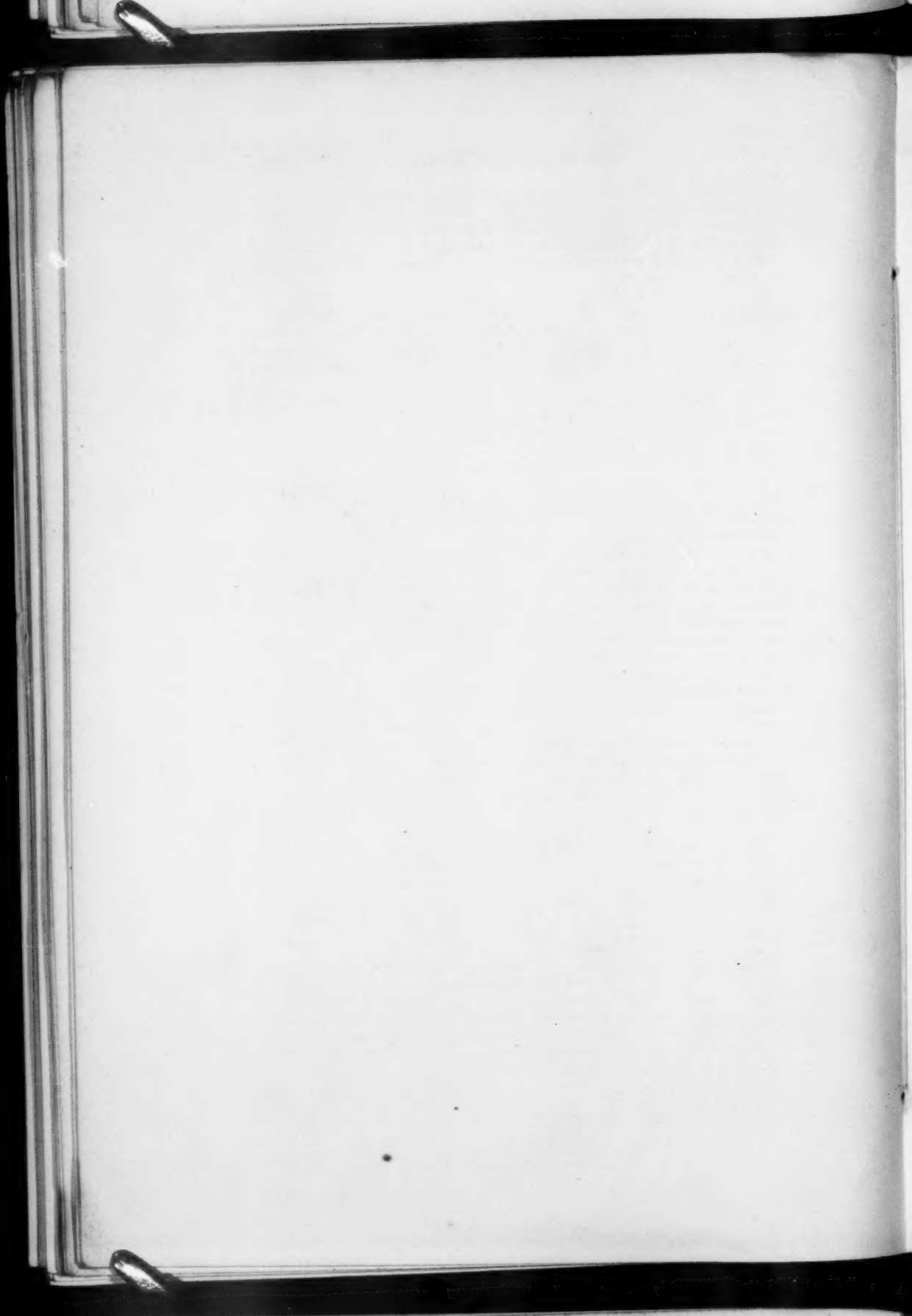
The "*notes annexes*" at the end of the book are valuable. No. VI is a powerful account of the terrible effect of the bomb which struck the church of St. Gervais on Good Friday, 1918, during the service, and did such execution to the wonderful organ which was played upon by an uninterrupted succession of Couperins for three centuries.


The writer of this notice thoroughly examined this instrument and played upon it at the beginning of 1914. Although in need of repair, it was still playable and gave a vivid impression of the tone colour and combinations for which the organ music of the eighteenth century was written. The organ has five manuals and pedals, the latter extending to A below the usual C, making the compass two octaves and a third.

It is possible to restore it; it is probable the difficult work will be done before long and there is hope that the instrument will not be modernised but preserved as one of the most beautiful and interesting organs in the world, and as a demonstration of the doubtful value of modern inventions applied to musical instruments.

The book contains a valuable analytical catalogue of all the works of all the Couperins and a good index. It is the result of years of patient research prompted by love of the old music. It is surprising therefore to find the author, pages 34 and 35, giving directions for thinning out the ornaments which, of course, form an integral part of the music. What would be said of an architect who proposed the removal of the, to him, superabundant ornaments of late Gothic architecture?

ARNOLD DOLMETSCH.





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